

# THE INVOCATION

Tactics

Painting

Tutorials

User Projects

and much

more...

Issue 1 June 2009

# INVOCATION

The Invocation E-Zine is a quarterly published E-zine produced by VampireCounts.net. and its members.

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# INVOCATION

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## Greetings from the Perverted One

Gut Evenink.....\*takes out false fangs\*

A warm welcome and hello to all who have made the very good decision of reading the first issue of The Invocation – Carpe Noctem’s quarterly e-zine.

Firstly, let me introduce myself to those who don’t know me. I am Disciple of Nagash, also known as the Perverted One, and damn proud of it! I’m an admin on Carpe Noctem, the biggest Vampire Counts forum on the internet, and have been a long follower of the dead. I started way back when it was still Undead and I still miss my super powered vampires of yesteryear, but I have stuck with the toothy ones ever since and I don’t plan on giving up any time soon!

It has certainly been a lot of hard work to get this E-zine off the ground, and first of all I have got to say a big well done to everyone who contributed. The amount of time and effort put in really astounded me, and I personally thought the quality was top notch.

Personally I hope The Invocation provides an insight to VC that many won’t have seen before. I recently visited many of the other race specific forums, and one thing that stood out, apart from the great quality and effort put into these sites, was that all the other players really seem to dislike our bony legions.

I wouldn’t say we are universally abhorred as the unfortunate Daemons of Chaos players are, but we’re kind of like that relative that nobody likes but tolerates.

I am the first to say that Vampire Counts can be over powered. 17PD Invocation spamming lists are no fun for anyone. We do have the tools to be potentially broken, but then again so does every army. I have seen many combos out there that make me cringe, but I would not judge the full army based on that one setup. Likewise, whilst VC can have some very effective armies my main goal is to show both VC players and other players there are plenty of fun effective builds, and there are also many simple strategies that can be deployed against. In short; VC are a tough army yes, but not a broken one.

Anyway, enough of my inane ramblings! The rest of the issue is waiting and I hope you all thoroughly enjoy it. Please leave feedback either at Carpe Noctem in the appropriate thread in the Bloodlines section, or in the various threads I have posted in the different sites.

May your dreams be full of lewd images.....

*Disciple of Nagash*

# Grave News

*"Ah my children, gather round and I will tell you the news the night brings....."*

Every issue we will provide updates , information and news about Carpe Noctem, or other little tidbits that may be of interest to our pointy toothed audience. So what's new?

In the near future Carpe Noctem will be introducing a **medal system**.

This means that an Administrator will be able to add a medal to members accounts which will show in the posters profile on the left hand side of posts.

The medals will be individual, displaying different icons in them, depending on what they were awarded for.

We plan to introduce various medals, but here are a definite few:

## *The Golden Bat Painting Competition*

The winner of this competition will receive a gold bat medal, the runner up will receive a silver bat medal.

## *The Vampire Council Players*

Members who join in a minimum of two chapters of The Vampire Council Roleplay will receive a silver medal. Long term players who have been in for over ten chapters will receive a gold medal. This means of course regular posters.

## *Army Milestones*

Any members who show an army wide shot of fully painted models, along with a valid army, and full army fluff list will receive a medal for the amount of points they have painted. There will be set milestones such as 1000pts, 1500pts ect.

## *Members of my Perverted Army!*

That's right! For my loyal followers who have joined my all conquering perverted force bent on world domination, I plan to create a medal so you can proudly show your allegiance.....though what the icon will be certainly sets the imagination going!

## Next up – **Wikipedia**.

It has long ago come to my attention that for the biggest Vampire Counts forum on the internet, we just don't have the background information that should be available to our members.

We have lots of knowledgeable members (I like to think I am somewhat of an expert on Nagash, though that just may be my delusion), so it's time to start putting it down somewhere.

A lot of information from previous editions has been lost, and only remains in the heads of players. So the plan is for this wealth of fluff to be out somewhere where anyone can find it, especially newer players who have never read the earlier (and in my opinion, more indepth) background.

Information will be posted up in the forum once the Wiki plugin has been implemented.

## **The Golden Bat Painting Competition.**

Following the great success of the last competition, I have decided to run another one this summer. Please see the advertisement in this issue for further details.



# *Ramblings of Nicodemus*

*The Ramblings of Nicodemus is a section of the webzine where you can send in questions to be answered by the wise Necrarch. These questions can be varied, and is much like an undead themed 'advice column'.*

*To ask a question of Nicodemus, send a private message to Swissdictator on Carpe Noctem with the subject "Ramblings of Nicodemus" or you can e-mail him at [sulebob@hotmail.com](mailto:sulebob@hotmail.com) with the same subject.*

Dreadful master Nicodemus,

I have recently been experimenting with attaching wings to the carcasses of vermin. Thus far I have been more or less successful when it comes to fusing the wings of a bat with the body of a rat, in fact it managed to effortlessly hover above my workbench for several minute before its wings failed.

Now I feel that it is time to move on to the next step, and before I devote the next decade to researching this topic I seek your advice.

Will it be viable to try and join the wings of a carrion bird with a rat? I believe the stronger wings would add much needed power to the construct, but I fear that my attempts may be futile as the raven is not as closely related to vermin as the bat.

Please help me in this query, Nicodemus, lest I devote unnecessary years of my unlife to an already tried subject.

Your humble pupil and admirer  
Dremol the Forsaken

Dremol the Forsaken,

It might be wise to consider using some muscles or tendons from a third species that is somewhat related to each. This species would serve to act a bridge and solve compatibility issues.

Many pupils face the problems you are facing, as while they think they see it from a large scale perspective, they sometimes forget the minor details that can make the difference between failure and success.

You may wish to consider using the wings from a younger carrion bird so the size and weight ratio is less out of balance, though it may be wise to empty the rat of unnecessary or redundant organs to reduce the overall weight.

Nicodemus

Dear Nicodemus,

I don't know what to do. Last night I managed to convince a gorgeous female mortal to come back to my lair. Everything was going well, she loved the black and even thought my coffin was cool!

But it all went wrong when it came down to the "business". I was nervous anyway, as I have always known the colour was wrong, but I didn't expect her to react like that. She took one look and turned away. She tried to pretend it was her, but I could see it was me.

Please help me - how do I get my fangs whiter than white again?

Yours in decaying tooth embarrassment

Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

I can see why you wish to keep your identity secret if you love to cavort around with the cattle. However if you insist on pursuing such mortal pursuits, I have just the formula for you.

Take the skins of an albino animal, any species will do, and dry it. Crumble the skins, as well as the creature's teeth, into a fine powder and mix with boiling water, stirring until it is pasty. Rub your teeth with this mix and wash away with the unused boiled water.

Nicodemus

Dear Ramblings of Nicodemus,

Why is it that all the zombie models are human, shouldn't there be zombie models from other races also? I'm thinking this because when raising Zombies their forms should be of the races buried/entombed in that region.

Thank You,  
The overly thinking Halfling.

Overly Thinking Halfling,

First I advise you spend more time with zombies, as they will cure you so you don't have to worry about being an overly thinking halfling ever again.

As for your question, it is because of that humans are very common in the world. However they could just as easily be elves.

They provide plenty of extra bits that if you desire zombie elves, you can buy elf models and mix in zombie bits and quickly have zombie (or even skeleton) elves.

This is harder to pull off with the newer Dwarf models, but if you can get the sixth edition ones, this is easier to accomplish. That, and finding your inner Necrarch and picking up a tool of the trade: an exacto knife, to do more detailed conversions.

As for Skaven, there are heads in their sprues which have always struck me as skeletal. If you get enough of those pits, and mix in some zombie bits you can have zombie skaven. The zombie sprues give you plenty of bits to use if you're willing to convert. Don't be intimidated by it, with some work it can look fantastic.

Nicodemus

Dear Master Nicodemus,

I've always been one to prefer the ghost and spirit for a servant before the less abstract skeleton and zombie, if not only due to the added cleanliness and less need of materials. Partly this might also be because of a certain natural aptitude that I possess, phantoms seem to become even more unquiet and active than usual when I'm around.

While this is indeed helpful when I require their aid and services, at the same time it can also turn controlling them, into something of an exercise in tiring myself out prematurely as the rowdy blighters caper about, sometimes almost completely deaf to my commands.

Now, I'll be first to admit that I might not have been studying and practicing the arts of dark magic as diligently as I could have but I've what it takes to change! Therefore, the question(s) that I have for you is as follows.

*What are the cornerstones to successfully establish control over a sizeable host of spirits? Is there anything that I should put particular priority to, if I wish to increase my mastery of the ethereal kind in an efficient way?*

I hope that this isn't too much to ask of one such as knowledgeable as yourself. Your advice could make all the difference in the world.

Yours admirably,  
The White Lady

The White Lady,

You need to create a spectral anchor for these spirits, focused on yourself. The Great Necromancer himself speaks of such anchors as being just like banners or trumpets for mortals, capable of both sending commands to the host and being a rallying point for such spirits. It is best to ensnare the spirit of young children or fertile women into whatever you chose to use for an anchor, for their voices have the greatest sway over the many spirits that wonder the world.

Nicodemus

"Dear Nicodemus, how come you ramble all the time instead of giving me a straight answer. I just want to know what you did with the scalpel I lent you the other day, so please tell me instead of going off on another irrelevant tangent about the vagaries of immorality and the laws of magic."

Vekarin

Vekarin

You might want to seek out Rob the Zombie. I believe he packed it up when he left my abode. Nagash only knows what he did with it by the time he eventually got to the lair of Disciple of Nagash...

Nicodemus



# Basic Tactics

*By Ergo\_sum*

## Which Required Core to Choose?

It's probably one of the most frequently asked questions, especially amongst those new to the world of undead:

'Which of the core infantry units should I use?'

In my opinion, all have their merits, and it will be somewhat dependent on your army build.

Let's examine each one in detail.

## Zombies - The Rotten

Some less than generous players might say that the 'rotten' description should apply to Zombie's full stop, and certainly their stat line and rules are nothing to write home about, however, they still have their uses. Although they are very poor, and will have a hard time even beating goblins in a straight up fight, they are very cheap for a fear causing model.

For 80 points you can get a US20 unit that causes fear, which means those goblins might decide they would really rather not fight those dead things. You can use this to your advantage, especially against low leadership armies such as humans.

By placing such units on your flanks, they can protect your main blocks and sometimes stop support elements from charging, as they may not be in range to use their general's leadership for their fear test. Large charging Zombie units can therefore also cause flee reactions on failed leadership test from your opponent which smaller units of our other core might not.

They can always be increased in size without a master power as well. This means that if you are likely to run vampires with no additional magic capacity, and a caster lord who'll probably using all of your basic power dice, it'll give those vampires or necromancers something to throw their dice at in order for it to not go to waste.

Due to their special rules, they can also be made huge with a relatively small expenditure of power dice. This obviously means they can become a very effective tar pit, although I'd only suggest that use against single enemy attack models.

Two or more attacks tend to lead to massive combat resolution against your Zombies, and therefore a lot of crumbling.

Zombies are as resistant to shooting, point for point, as Ghouls, so can make decent table quarter holders as well, if you are going for an aggressive knights and Zombie dragon type list.

Minimum size units need to take 16 casualties to be non-scoring, as opposed to the Ghouls taking 6, however the Ghouls might actually fight something off that is sent to kill them.

They can purchase a Standard and a Musician. This can help them to maintain their size, due to extra +1 combat resolution for the standard, and might even, against really poor enemy troops, let them win a combat.

However, this needs to be weighed against the fact that captured standards are worth an extra 100 victory points for your opponent. These can effectively double the victory point amount your Zombie unit is worth.

I would generally only suggest giving your Zombies a standard if you start them large, thirty plus models, or you are quite magic heavy and plan to raise them up pretty quickly.

Musicians can be occasionally useful, are pretty cheap, and don't give a way any extra victory points, so can be a reasonable idea on any sized unit if you have a few spare points.

They do, as you would expect from a 4 point model, suffer from some rather severe disadvantages as well! Not being able to put in characters in Zombie units hurts their ability to actually damage the enemy. A combat orientated vampire placed in such a Zombie unit might allow them to win fights, but alas, it is not allowed.

In the current edition of the rules, characters really need to be in units to avoid being sniped. Unfortunately, Zombies do not offer your characters this safety.

Zombie units will also give away a huge amount of combat resolution. It's quite easy to have 5 or so Zombies killed in a turn from a relatively moderate unit, which could then lead to a similar number killed again from crumbling.

Your huge Zombie unit can quickly fall away without significant magical support. If you have equipped your Zombies with a standard, this will often mean an easy 100 victory points for the unit standard, which nets the enemy more than actually killing a minimum sized units!

This also means that you will not really want to flank an enemy unit engaged to the front with Zombies, as often so much combat resolution will be generated by killing Zombies, that it could kill off or seriously damage your flanking unit. This is even truer of expensive small units that are unable to break ranks like Wraiths and Varghulfs.

Not being able to pursue but doing hits instead, is a bit of a double edged sword. On the one hand, it can be quite useful against light units such as flyers or light cavalry.

This is because you are unlikely to catch them any way when they flee, and it means you're Zombies can't be pulled out of position by sneaky opponents.

However, the amount of damage done is often minimal, except against the weakest foes and one less unit to roll for pursuit can often mean the difference between catching and wiping out the enemy or not.



The final point against bringing Zombies in your starting list is that they are very easy to summon in game. This will allow you to put such points towards other units, while you raise what units of Zombies you need.

As Raise Dead is the default spell on Lore of Vampires, you can be certain of getting it if you want it, and it works well with the Sceptre de Noiro.

## Ghouls – The Feral

Ghouls are often the core choice of a fast attacking army list. A good stat line for an undead unit combined with fear and poison make them a force to be reckoned with. However, as you would expect, they live up to their cowardly fluff and will often crumble away when the battle is going against them, due to their limited basic combat resolution.

The first thing to notice about Ghouls is their excellent stat line for an 8 point model. Having 2 poison attacks at WS3, S3, I3 with T4 to soak up return hits is a very solid statistic line, and obviously is particularly useful against tough yet slow and low armoured units like Giants, Manticores etc.

Ghouls can often stand up better to similar sized units of enemy core troops than either Skeletons or Zombies due to having that all important WS3 and I3. The toughness is particularly helpful against missile units, for example hand gunners or repeater crossbows who rely on AP to help cause casualties rather than strength.

Ghouls, due to their rather good statistics and lack of command, are best run in slightly longer thin units, rather than the traditional five wide. This is because they actually can kill things, which is rather shocking for a Vampire 'true' core unit, but lack the armour or command.

This means you'll want to maximise the number of models in contact with the enemy, in order to get as many attack in as possible. Seven wide is a common starting width, as it will allow you 14 attacks on a standard five wide enemy block.

It's always worth paying attention to enemy blocks of troops that you are likely to engage, and adjusting your width to get one extra Ghoul on each side, even more so if you can increase your size with the Summon Ghouls power.

For example, if your enemy is running a unit six wide, you might want to consider expanding your Ghouls to be eight wide, although you have to be aware that this makes you less able to move your unit without interference from other units and terrain.

Ghouls also have some excellent synergy with certain vampire powers and builds. The most obvious being that you can give a vampire the Summon Ghouls master power, so the vampire can increase the unit past their starting size with Invocation of Nehek.

This is nearly always useful as it can allow you to start with a smaller Ghoul unit, say 14 rather than 21. Those 7 less Ghouls save you 56 points yet summon Ghouls' costs you 15.

As long as you have the spare capacity to fit this on your vampires, that's 41 points that can be spent on other units. Do this with two units, and it gets you a whole extra unit of 4 Fell bats.

The other useful power is Ghoulin. This grants a free march move before the game, which is very useful against shooty armies or those that will try use speed to get to our flanks and rear. Ghoulin allows you to put the pressure of infantry blocks on to your opponent's army quickly.

One word of warning with using Ghoulin though, is that it puts you nearer to the enemy, so will give you less time to raise extra Ghouls. Against enemy combat orientated list, it may only be of limited use.

The fact that Ghouls can take characters in them is a major bonus over Zombies. Let's face it, you generally don't want your really expensive Vampire lord running around on his own, and killed by a lucky cannon or bolt thrower shot.

This also allows for a few cunning tricks. The first is to get a combat vampire with either Flying Horror or Talisman of Lycni in a Ghoul unit, and then use Ghoulin.

If you get the first turn, this will then allow said vampire a first turn charge of 28" if used with Flying Horror. This can be crippling for a gunline based army, who will probably loose their best war machine to this tactic.

This tactic is fairly common, but there is not a lot an opponent can do about it other than fleeing the charge, which is where flying horror is superior to Talisman of Lycni.

Using characters in a Ghoul unit can also make up for their major weakness, no command. Vampire powers like Walking Death, Battle standards possibly with the Warbanner on them, can all go a long way to increasing a Ghoul units static combat resolution.

Obviously, all this comes at a price, in both point and character slots, but it can be worth it to significantly improve a Ghoul unit.

It's worth mentioning that you should always take a Ghast if you are going to put a character in a unit of Ghouls, but it's almost never worth it if you are not.

One extra attack for the same price as another Ghoul really is not worth it, but they are fantastic for taking or issuing challenges that your vampire would rather not get involved in.

When that High Elf Prince and Star Dragon crash into your Ghoul unit and Lord, you'll be thankful you found a few extra points to upgrade one of your Ghouls to a Ghast!



Ghouls, like any unit, suffer some disadvantages. They are rather pricey, at eight points a model in comparison to Zombies.

This means that you will often be outnumbered if you concentrated on using Ghouls as your core unit, especially as we often have to spend a significant amount of our points on characters to allow our army to operate effectively.

As has been mentioned above, this can be countered by using Summon Ghouls master power with slightly smaller units, but magic can be fickle.

Your opponent may concentrate all their direct damage magic and shooting on a small unit, and then dispel any attempts to heal up such a damaged unit, to be finished off next turn. And while their statistics are good, their point cost is not worth it just for the statistics. Fear works best on large units, and the more you pay for each model, the more expensive it is to out-number enemy units.

Their lack of command and armour can make them vulnerable to some enemy units. The lack of standard and musician can often hurt Ghouls, meaning that when the start to lose fights, their numbers crumble away rather more quickly than either Skeletons or Zombies.

This also means that they can't access any of the rather good magic banners, although on the positive side, it means that the cost of the unit is kept down and there are no standards for your opponent to capture.

Of course, you can always just re-raise your Ghouls that have crumbled away, but that is requiring more of your power dice to maintain them, which could have been used in other ways.

Ghouls tend to rely on their poison to deal casualties, and dealing casualties to win combats. Against highly armoured enemy units like Dwarfs or Heavy cavalry, this is not going to be particularly effective when you only have strength 3.

A seven wide unit of Ghouls is likely to only get one kill on WS 3 T 3 2+ save knights, assuming they get to go first. If Ghouls are charged, then they'll get no kills, and be losing combat by quite a lot!

Ghouls don't do that well against armour, and don't have the armour or command option to maintain a decent combat resolution score. As they do well against tough no/low armour troops, so troops with poison, or auto wounding rules do well against them. Units like Skinks or certain spells that wound on a certain roll will bypass Ghouls toughness. Ironically, a good unit to fight Ghouls are other Ghouls.

## **Skeletons – The Aged**

Skeleton have a different role again from the other two 'true' core of the vampire counts armies. While Zombies are poor but cheap, and Ghouls are dangerous but cowardly, Skeletons are solid and reasonably well armoured. They are often used to make huge static combat resolution blocks or as solid troops which will have the least crumbling in combat.

The statistic line of your Skeleton falls somewhat between Ghouls and Zombies. While nowhere near as good as Ghouls, for Weapon skill 3 or 4 troops, which are the vast majority in the Warhammer world, they hit as often as Ghouls, although they lack the poison or the extra attack.

Where they do shine is their armour. Light armour and shield gives them a 5+ save against shooting and 4+ save in combat.

I'm sure that most of you will be able to work out that probability for yourselves, but in summary, this means that against strength 3 shooting, strength 3 or 4 combat hits, then Skeletons are more resilient to damage than Ghouls.

At higher strength, the reduction in armour save makes Ghouls more resilient than Skeletons to being wounded. The point is though that most basic, and quite a few elite troops, will only be hitting on strength 3 or 4, making Skeletons better suited to take on such troops.

The ability to take a full command, combined with the choice of a wide variety of decent magic banners is another advantage to using Skeletons. These command options will mean that Skeletons are less likely to be taking large numbers of crumbling casualties,

even if the fight starts to go against them. You can outfit your Skeletons with many good magic banners, such as the ever popular War Banner or the Banner of the Dead Legion to increase your chances of outnumbering the enemy unit.

Due to this defensive role, it is very rare to see Skeletons run in any formation, other than five wide. They are not very good at actually killing the enemy, so there is little point in removing ranks to get a few extra WS 2 attacks.

This is slightly different if you have armed your Skeletons with spears. However, spears are generally considered to be a sub-par weapon layout for Skeletons. On the one hand, you can still go for hand weapon and shield, so buying spears does increase a units flexibility, but it does push up the cost, and the extra attacks usually do not gain back extra casualties that you loose from having a lower armour save. Using spears can work against poor enemy units, but then, your Skeletons would have probably beaten them any way.

Certain items like the Helm of Commandment and Staff of Damnation can make spears more effective, but then, to my mind, you are using a lot of support options to make spears work, that could have been better employed in other uses or places.

Skeletons, like Ghouls, work well with certain builds of vampires. The caster vampire with Lord of the dead is a fairly common sight in any Vampire army with a significant number of Skeletons. As with Ghouls, it allows you to run smaller Skeleton units in order to save points for other units. This is slightly riskier with Skeletons, due to them being more vulnerable to small arms fire, particularly handguns.

One way to avoid this is to just set up a fraction back from your 12" set up point, to be just out of range from any such handguns if you do not have the first turn to boost your Skeletons in size. One important point, with both Ghouls and Skeletons, is not relying on being able to reliably push up three such units in to a combat reasonable size. Even two might not happen if your opponent has a lot of dispel dice and/or shooting.

It's often better to play it safe and just have one or two such combat units, who will just need a little bit of boosting, rather than gambling on three minimum sized units.

As with Ghouls, the ability for vampire to be placed in Skeletons is a major plus. In the same way to Ghouls, I'd only include a Skeleton champion in those units where I was going to put a character.

A Skeleton champion does even less damage than a Ghast, but is worth it to protect a character. There are also Vampire builds that work well in Skeleton units. One of my favourites is to have a vampire who is a BSB with walking death and whatever other powers you see fit.

If you put that vampire into a large Skeleton unit the Warbanner, you are looking at a static combat resolution of +8 before any attacks are made. This can be especially useful against Immune to Psychology troops who will not 'auto' flee if you beat them by one and you out-number them.

So, what are the downsides? Well, although better than Zombies, their statistics really are not that good. WS 2 means hitting the increasing number of WS 5 and upwards troops on 5+. Combined with strength 3 and initiative 2, Skeletons will not kill much of even the most basic of troops.



Their defensive capacities also are reduced when faced with higher strength and/or armour piecing enemies. If charged by knights, they can often take a lot of damage on the first turn. Skeleton are also vulnerable to any spell or item that does not allow armour saves, although these are usually targeted at our more heavily armoured troops.

While buying all these command models and magic banners gives them much better static combat resolution, it all cost points. This means a similar pointed Ghoul unit would be larger, and possibly be better able to exploit the fear rules. The banner can also be potential extra victory points for your enemy, although it's not as vulnerable to capture as a Zombie banner.

As mentioned with Ghouls, Skeletons are not cheap to start with. The more points you pour into a unit, the more likelihood there is of you being outnumbered, and potentially outmanuvoured due to having fewer units making your units more susceptible to being flanked.

## Conclusion

So, after all that, which is best? The answer is .... no one unit 'true' core is best.

They all perform different roles in different army set ups. The important thing is to know and understand the capabilities of each unit, and then build them and use them on the table top to maximise these abilities.

As long as you use the right tool for the job, you should be pretty content with using any of our core units.

*Ergo-Sum*



# Army Showcase

As most of you know, I love trawling through the many paint logs on CN. It never ceases to amaze me the skill and thought that many people put into their army, most which make me go green with envy! So I felt it would be fitting to showcase the armies that stand out, the ones in which the player has put just that extra bit of effort that made us go “wow”.

I felt it was fitting to start off with the winner of the first Golden Bat competition, **Illusionarypresence**. His Wight King Battle Standard Bearer was the clear winner, and looking at the rest of his Mousillon themed army, it's easy to see why.

## Disciple of Nagash

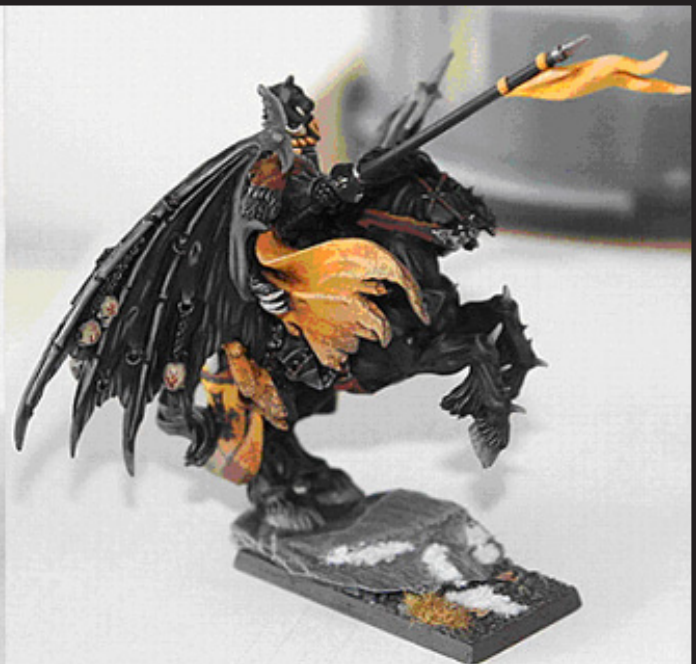
Golden Bat Winner – Wight King Battle Standard Bearer:

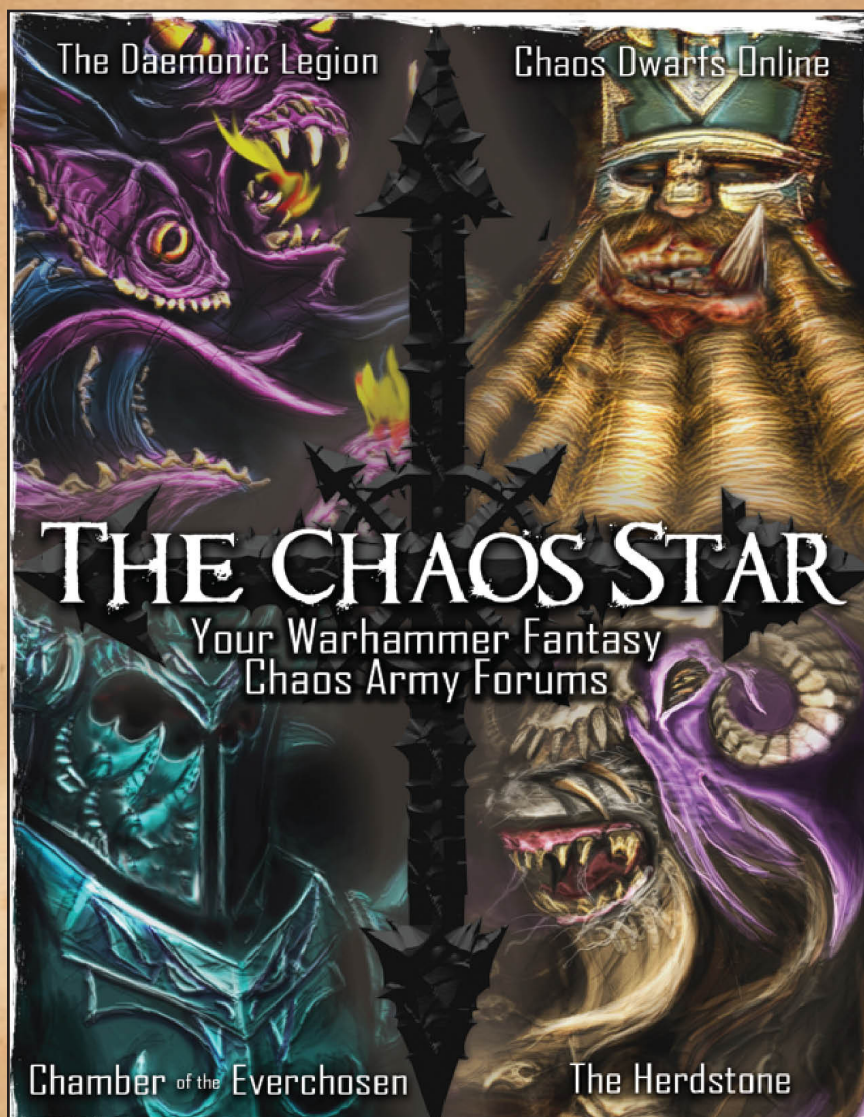




*Invocation - Army Showcase*







# Painting Skeletons

*By TheDarkSheep*

**It is a rare Vampire Counts army indeed that goes to war without skeletons bolstering its ranks. Be it wight, skeleton or the odd jutting splint of bone on a zombie, every Vampire Counts general needs to know how to paint what makes the fundamentals of the army itself.**

You will need the following paints:

- Khemri Brown,
- Devlan Mud,
- Bleached Bone,
- Skull White

## Step 1:

Water down Khemri Brown until you get a free flowing, but not too thin, consistence that is easy to work with.

Apply this to all the bone areas on the model, and while still wet, work the paint around till you get a smooth, even coat.

Due to all the crevasses on the skeleton model the paint tends to pool up in places (especially the ribs and lower arms/legs), so it is important to remove any excess paint lest it obscures the details. This can easily be done by sucking up the paint with a dry brush and move it to your palette before you repeat.



## Step 2:

Use Devlan Mud straight from the pot to shade the Khemri Brown areas.

Be generous with the paint to get as good a result as possible, but just like in the above step distribute the paint evenly around the model to avoid having it pool up in unwanted places.

The purpose of this and the next step is to get definition on the model, so it is not the end of the world if you make a mistake, as this can be fixed later.



### Step 3:

Lightly drybrush the bone with Bleached Bone. I know of many people that tend to load their brushes with paint and just wipe it off once or twice before preceding to the painting itself.

Now this is the last thing you want to do in this case, because even though the crevices might be quite deep, they tend to be filled up with paint rather quickly.

One way to minimize this outcome is to have an as dry brush as possible, and do several thin coats instead of a single thick one. Take care to stroke across the bones and not with them, thus avoiding getting the bristles in between the ribs.



### Step 4:

After having drybrushed the bone in the last step, paint all the pronounced bone areas with slightly watered down Bleached Bone.

Examples of such places are the hips, arms/legs and of course the skull, but you have to judge for yourself what parts needs to be painted (in the case of this model I had to do pretty much all of it).

The consistency of the paint you should aim for is that of milk, as it is fluid while still containing enough colour.



### Step 5:

The model should be ready to put on the table by now, but it tends to look somewhat flat and boring. In order to fix this give the bone a very light drybrush of Skull White.

It is important to get this as light as possible, because the Skull White drastically changes the model if not applied with care. This is a perfect example that proves the expression "less is more".

While at this stage you can take the time to pick out the teeth with Skull White, this won't make that much of difference.



## Step 6:

If you have made any mistakes you can fix them at this step by giving the areas a thin wash of Devlan Mud. Rather than just putting on some paint and hope it turns out good you should paint the wash into the crevasses. This is because you want the already dark areas to be affected by the wash and not the nicely painted raised areas. The spine, ribs and knee caps are places often in need of this kind of treatment, but this may vary from model to model.



## Finishing off the skeleton

People have their own way of painting clothes, leather and metal, so I won't go too much into detail about painting these areas as they don't play such a significant role on the skeleton model.

You will need the following paints:

- Chaos Black
- Adeptus Battlegrey
- Scorched Brown
- Bestial Brown
- Boltgun Metal
- Devlan Mud

### Clothes:

On a model like this, where the clothes are of little importance, I prefer to work in only two layers. I find the various greys Games Workshop produces to be a little too light to work as a base coat for the clothes, so I mix Adeptus Battlegrey with Chaos Black in a 1:1 ratio. As a highlight I use pure Adeptus Battlegrey painted over the basecoat with a relatively wet drybrush.

### Leather:

The leather was done with a simple coat of Scorched Brown. This was highlighted with two thin coats of Bestial Brown.

#### Metal:

When painting corroded metal I don't like applying a thin coat and being neat. Instead I'll often let the paint dry a bit on my palette or even mix in some dust or other tiny particles before I start painting. Uneven and lumpy paint will, if done correctly, add a realistic texture that makes it look rusty and old.

The basecoat colour I use is Boltgun Metal, a paint that has a tendency to dry pretty quickly and is perfect for this. After I'm sure the basecoat has dried I apply a thick wash of Devlan Mud to the metal, making sure it pools up in patches. Sometimes I even use my finger to smudge the drying wash to add to that corroded feel. Finally I add scratches to various spots on the metal with Mithril Silver.

#### Shield:

The shield was painted in the same way as the clothes simply because it is the uniform colour of my army. The skeleton has limited cloth available to paint multi coloured uniforms, so the shield is a good place to show it off and use for tying the unit together with all your other models.



## Alternative ways of painting bone

Just like human skin, bone can be painted in several different ways. Some might prefer decayed, yellowed bone while others like it when the skeleton has been washed clean by the ocean for centuries. It is impossible to cover all the ways of painting bone, but I have tried to make a few alternatives that I feel fit three different themes.

You will need the following paints:

- |                     |                |                    |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| - Bestial Brown     | - Skull White  | - Charadon Granite |
| - Snakebite Leather | - Devlan Mud   | - Bleached Bone    |
| - Bleached Bone     | - Dheneb Stone | - Badab Black      |



### From the Burning Desert:

Over a Chaos Black coat of spray I base coated the model with Bestial Brown. This was followed by a relatively wet drybrush of snakebite leather, which in turn was followed up by a mix of Snakebite Leather and Bleached Bone. The mix was progressively worked up to pure Bleached Bone in two more steps. The closer I got to pure Bleached Bone the lighter I brushed.



### From the Dark Swamplands:

Using Skull White as primer this model was washed with Devlan Mud. It is important to make sure the bone areas are completely white and not grey before applying the wash, so a coat of skull white paint might be needed. Then the washed areas were carefully highlighted with slightly watered down Dheneb Stone.

### From the Cold Wastes:

To achieve the dark and sinister look of this model I base coated it with Charadon Granite. Working in four more layers the colour was worked up to Bleached Bone.

The first layers were done by drybrushing, but the final highlight of pure Bleached Bone was carefully applied with a wet brush to avoid getting the rugged, uneven look of a drybrushed model. Finally a watered down wash of Badab Black was evenly distributed over the model



# *The Golden Bat Competition Summer '09*

It is with great excitement and pleasure we can announce the upcoming Golden Bat Competition – Summer '09. Enter for the chance of winning prizes and prestige that will earn you the envy of all your friends! If you are interested please read all the detail below carefully, and then get those painting brushes going.

## **Entry Opens – 01 July 2009**

A stickied thread will be created in the painting and modelling section of Carpe Noctem, entitled "The Golden Bat Painting Competition – Summer '09".

Until the closing date, any of the specified entries will be accepted. WIP shots are allowed and encouraged. Your final entry photos should state clearly in a title above the photos "Final Entry". Each final entry is allowed up to three photos from various angles.

## **Criteria:**

- One entry per person.
- Model must be related to VC in some way but does not have to come from the GW range. So models from Reaper etc are acceptable.
- Models must be fully painted (obviously), and conversions are fully acceptable and encouraged.
- Models must be painted by the entrant (no claiming credit for other peoples work!)
- Models have to have been painted this year, no entering models painted years ago.
- You cannot enter models entered in the previous Golden Bat Competition.
- Monster mounts are allowed

## **The allowed entries are as follows:**

- Any VC character (inc special characters), with or without appropriate mounts
- One Command group from the following: Skeletons, Grave Guard, Black Knights, Blood Knights.
- Champion plus two troops from the following: Ghouls, Dire Wolves, Wraiths
- Standard Bearer plus two troops from the following: Zombies
- One of the following: Corpse Cart, Fell Bat, Spirit Host base, Bat Swarm base, Black Coach, Varghulf or Zombie Giant.

**Entry Closes – 31 July 2009 at 22:00 GMT.** All photos marked "Final Entry" will then be put forward to voting.

**Poll Opens – 01 August 2009 1200 GMT.** A poll will be created with all the entrants displayed in the thread. Members will be able to vote for one entry only. Entrants may vote, but they may not vote for their own entry! (This will be checked on)

**Poll Closes – 15 August 2009 1200GMT.** The poll will be closed and the winner and second place announced!

## The Prizes:

### First Place

The winning model will be displayed in the welcome portal to Carpe Noctem.  
A gold medal for their profile.  
100 Zombies for their profile  
Their model will form part of the new Carpe Noctem Banner (See Below)

### Second Place

A silver medal for their profile  
50 Zombies for their profile  
Their model will also form part of the new Carpe Noctem Banner (See Below)

### All Entrants

Everybody who enters will receive 10 zombies.

### The Carpe Noctem Banner

As some of you will remember, the winner and second place of the first Golden Bat Competition had the honour of their models forming part of the new Carpe Noctem banner:



(Left: Illusionarypresences Wight King, Right: SethDrallitoc's Zombie Giant)

I have decided to carry this on as a tradition, so if you would like to see you models displayed proudly by Carpe Noctem, you know what to do!

The winning models will stay in the new banner for six months until the completion of the next Golden Bat Competition.



# Funny Zombie Pose Competition

Well we finally did it! After a few failed attempts in the past we finally held a successful “Funny Zombie Pose” competition, and what a great success it was as well. It just goes to show that perseverance does pay off, as our braindead friends know all too well! Mmmmmm...brains!

We had over twelve entries and it was exceptionally hard judging who was to be the winner. The quality of each entry was very high, with inventive conversions and superb paintjobs. However when it came down to it there was three that just went that little bit further. So in reverse order.....

## 3rd Place – “Zombie Pope” by The Dark Lord Mr. Fluffy



This one just stood out due to the sheer hilarity of it. A firm favourite when it was entered, there was no doubt it was going to make this into the top three.

The Dark Lord Mr. Fluffy has done some great conversion work with the bat-hat and book, and the attention to detail with the phrase “All Hail Zombology” written in the book, was really outstanding.

Though it was not announced at the time, I have decided to award third place thirty zombie points.

## 2nd Place – “It’s a mere flesh wound....”by The Dark Sheep

It’s clear just by looking at this way this was awarded a very respectful second place. First of all, the originality of the conversion made it stand out a mile. I have seen many zombies chopped in half, but never have I seen anyone bisect one in half. Not only was it a great idea, but the implementation is top notch. Skilled conversion work, the sculpting of the spine and then a fantastic paint job to finish. It really does go to show why TDS was requested to do the painting guide in this article. A result that anyone should be proud of, and one which I award sixty zombies to.



## The Winner – “The Wannabe Knight” – by Krogholt

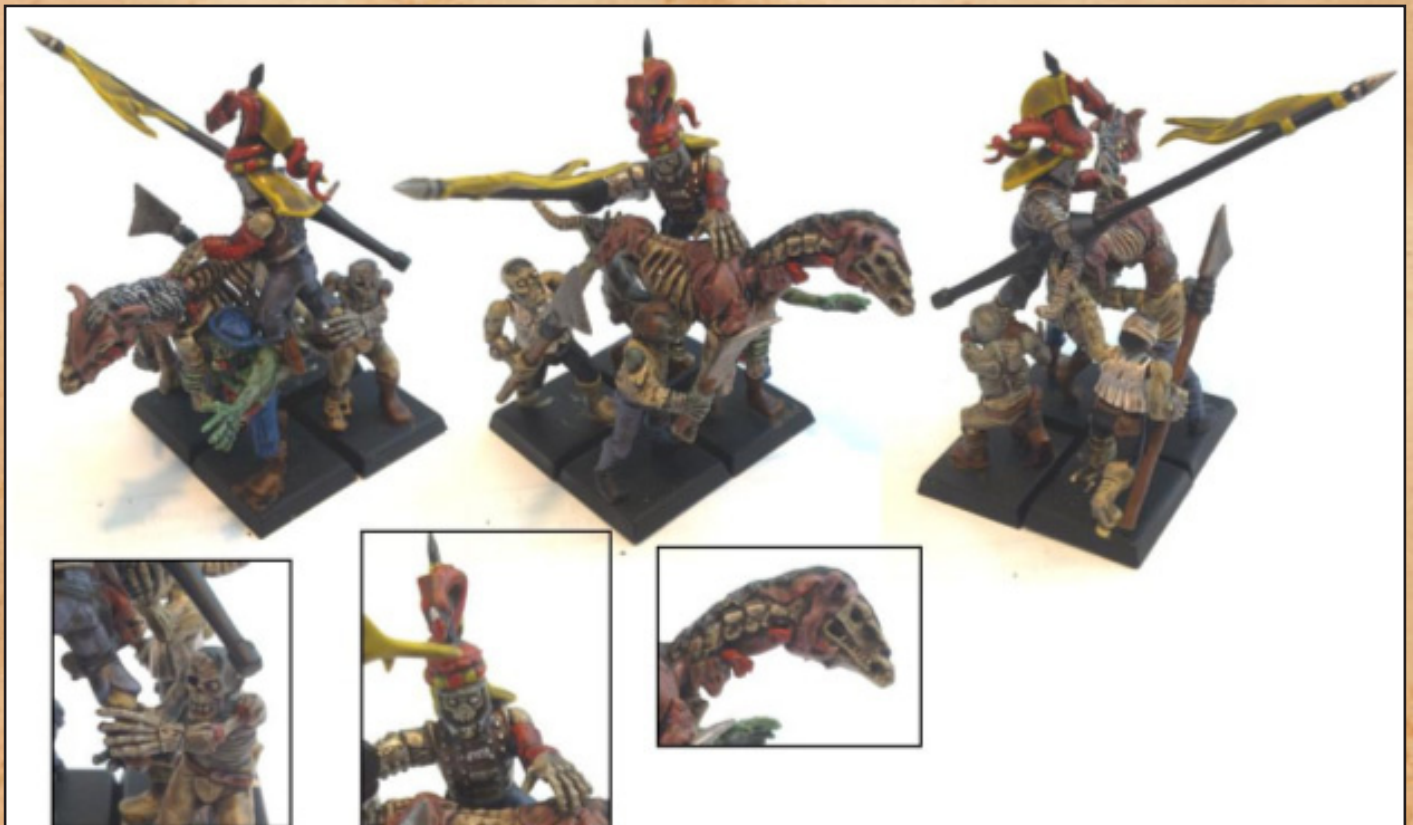
For me this entry combined the best out of the competition. Again a great idea followed up by a conversion that has had a lot of time spent on it. I also really like the story it portrays about a zombie that just wanted to be a knight, even the braindead can dream!

The painting is again done to a very good level, especially the bone. It is also nice to see that Krogholt has not just stuck to the dreary colours that many players insist on sticking to with VC. The wide pallet of colours used just adds to this superb model and all in all, it certainly deserves first place.

As advertised Krogholt will receive one hundred zombies, and also the coveted Zombie Medal!

Congratulations and thanks to all those who entered, in fact I am so pleased with the response, that everyone who did enter will also receive ten zombies.

If you are interested in CN's other painting competition, why not check out the upcoming Golden Bat Competition?



# User Projects

*By Disciple of Nagash*

No doubt a fair few of you are asking, what exactly are User Projects? So for those who are not regulars on Carpe Noctem I will elaborate.

Sometimes our illustrious members have ideas that are just too much for one thread.

It may be to create a full army list, write in-depth background or any number of ideas. For the ideas that gather enough support and interest, we will always support and create a special area for it to be worked on, and thus a user project is born!

As always some projects loose interest, but there are some which grow and grow and it is these that deserve recognition. Not only do they provide fun and entertainment, but hopefully they will encourage others to try and create projects of their own.

So in this section of the Invocation I will be providing updates as well as "tasters" as to the progress to the three most successful projects:

- The Vampire Council
- The Legion of Nagash
- Bloodline Armies

## The Vampire Council

Known as the TVC for short, many members will know that I think of this project as my "baby". Considering it grows larger and larger and has ever-growing demands for my attention, it is disturbingly similar to the real thing!

In its simplest terms it is a roleplay, but then again it is so much more. It was originally started over a year ago, when myself and another member Simon von Carstein got a ridiculous idea into our heads to write a co-operative story.

Surprisingly it got a great reception, to the point that chapter two introduced various other players and it went on from there.....and it certainly did it go on!

Now over a year later it has over thirty-chapters, over a dozen supplemental pieces and other miscellaneous threads. This small story has turned into an epic saga currently running at over eight thousand posts.

So what is the story about?

To tell it in detail would take more pages than this e-zine has, but the basic premise is a fight for survival. Our selfish and arrogant vampires have been forced to band together to combat the growing strength of Nagash. The story has taken many twist and turns, but the first part mainly involved battling Mannfred von Carstein, who was revealed as the pawn of Nagash. Through many trials, defeats and victory the Council managed to eventually destroy him, and gain control over the land of Sylvania.

But that was only the start, as Nagash finally regained his claw and crown and began his conquest of the world once more.

Yes, you heard right, one thing this role-play has done is basically create an alternate timeline, where the heroes and villains of the Old World can die like any other.

Gotrek has made an appearance (and kicked a couple of vampires into the ground!), as well as many other well known characters. This isn't a linear strict storyline, but an ever-growing novel which has depth, character, twists and turns like any other book.

That leads nicely to one of the main things that makes the TVC unique. Whilst there is an overall storyline, that isn't all there is. Everyone involved is encouraged to develop their own characters, to create side plots and adventures.

This can mean a player can effectively design and plan chapters of their own, all of which adds to the overall depth of the story. It isn't just about a bunch of vampires trying to kill Nagash, it is also about Lesa trying to find a way to rescue her husband, about Simon von Carsteins goal to resurrect Vlad's dream.

This freedom to think and develop things yourself is the main reason we have stayed involved for so long. Of course someone has to ensure that all these plots don't contradict each other, and mess up the main storyline.

In this case I manage all the plots, but as only I know all the plans it means others can still be surprised and enjoy unexpected turns.

I think in the full life of the TVC only about four ideas have had to be declined, all the other hundreds more have been given the ok.

The final thing, and possibly the most important, is that the TVC is always open to new players. As expected some players drop in and out, however there are always the few core players who constantly post. So if you do like the sound of it, feel free to drop by and write up a bio. As soon as we know what kind of character you have created, we can write him, her or maybe it (it doesn't have to be a vampire character) into the current chapter, and thus the story goes on.....

For those who are interested into the escapades of the Council, here is the summary of the first fifteen chapters so far. If you would like to read them fully, you can find The Vampire Council project at CN, which is available for everyone to see.

#### Chapter 1:

Milosh Cromwell and Simon von Carstein form an alliance. In return for Melkchoir's painting which holds the secret to obtaining his corporeal body, Milosh promises to aid Simon in overthrowing Mannfred von Carstein and becoming ruler of Sylvania, and more importantly promises the magical assistance of Mistress Lesa

#### Supplement to Chapter 1:

An unknown person steals the Crown of Sorcery from the magical vaults in Altdorf.

#### Chapter 2:

Drakki of the previous unknown Gladius bloodline summons various vampires, in an attempt to create a powerful council to overthrow the Empire. A traitor betrays them and they are ambushed by a witch hunter army which they are forced to flee from, but not before Mistress Lesa destroys the majority of the enemy army with a comet.

#### Chapter 3:

The newly formed council reconvenes at Simon von Carstein's fortress Nexeternus, and Vekarin the Dark Bladed joins the Council after a fiery entrance. Tension mounts when Lesa and Vekarin engage in a duel, the traitor is revealed and warning comes that a new witch hunter army is on its way. Deciding to split their forces, the vampires set off on their own objectives.

#### Supplement to Chapter 3:

Reveals how the traitor is found out and the confrontation between Rask and Rayla over warpstone left behind from the comet's impact.

#### Chapter 4:

Simon von Carstein meets his cousin Angelica von Carstein and attempts to convince her to join the council. Unsure she at least agrees to spread the word of the new council.

#### Chapter 5:

Going after the traitor Magneqrox, Milosh and Lesa are ambushed. Whilst they get escape, they pay the ultimate price wiping out Magneqrox's army in the process.

#### Chapter 6:

Going after the witch hunter army proves to be dangerous for Vekarin, Katrina and Graveclaw as they encounter not only deadly runic weapons and powerful wizards, but also run into Gotrek and Felix.

#### Chapter 7:

The vampire council reconvenes at the Violet Citadel, fortress of Vekarin. Milosh has been revived and the council formulate a plan to also revive Lesa, needing her abilities to face Mannfred.

A few new arrivals in the form of Valda, V'azrin and Mircea von Carstein who has heard of his brother's quest. The council are also informed of the Crowns theft. They decide to split their party once again, one to find the crown, the other to remove the threat of Magneqrox and steal his life force for Lesa.

#### Chapter 8:

Mircea, Katrina and Graveclaw go after the crown meeting Count Feldenhau on the way, whilst they are successful at obtaining it they have an encounter with a dangerous rabbit, as well as Gotrek and Felix.

#### Supplemental piece to Chapter 8:

Details of Gotrek and Felix's trek to Mordheim

#### Chapter 9:

The might of the hosts of Vekarin and Valda fall upon the keep of Magneqrox, supported by the vampire lords of the council. Milosh and Magneqrox duel one on one, neither finally being able to claim as the winner. The keep eventually falls and Magneqrox and Finelle are captured, the captured life-force is used in an attempt to revive Lesa but the procedure goes horribly wrong.

## Supplement to Chapter 9

Shows the return of Rask and his plotting of the downfall of the council. Also the preparation of war for Nexeternus.

## Chapter 10:

Simon takes Finelle back to Nexeternus as well as the comatose Milosh. Meanwhile the council erupts into fighting, which eventually leads them being sealed in the great hall of Violet Citadel by Vekarin, in the hope of teaching them a lesson.

Feldenhaus is revealed as a traitor, and with the Crown of Sorcery he frees Magneqrox who claims the crown and cuts down Valda. He then frees Finelle from Nexeternus killing Simon's gets at the same time. Meanwhile the revived Milosh and Simon have travelled back to the Violet Citadel

## Chapter 11:

Rask launches an attack on the Violet Citadel using his secret weapon in the form of the newly resurrected Lesa. The battle seems lost until the tables are turned when Milosh manages to free Lesa and regains his powers. Valda attacks at the same time using the claw of Nagash, after a hard battle the claw is cut off by Mircea who gives it to Lesa for safe keeping. The Violet Citadel survives but in the aftermath Milosh falls out with Vekarin and the council falls apart.

## Chapter 12:

In his rage Simon goes after Magneqrox after reviving his gets, in the ensuing battle the keep of Feldenhaus is torched and Magneqrox, Finelle and Emily are left in the fire. Simon is also successful in retrieving the crown

## Chapter 13:

Milosh goes looking for Simon and meets him on his way back to Nexeternus, at this point they are ambushed by Mannfred who succeeds in capturing the crown. The remaining council members reconvene at Nexeternus to discuss the next plan of action, there Milosh realises his mistake in insulting Vekarin and it is decided they must find a way to regain his trust.

A new arrival in the form of the human Katie who is the long prophesied get of Lesa, wasting no time she turns her into a stunning Lahmian, V'azrin reveals he can give Milosh his body back and takes him back to his tower to do so, however Lesa mistakenly thinks Milosh was kidnapped, follows them and defeats V'azrin in a magical duel before the mistake is realised.

After reconciliations the three return to Nexeternus to meet Merovich, a Blood Dragon wishing to kill Katrina who has hidden away from him.

Katie is dispatched on a quest to find Rask for Lesa whilst Mircea defeats Merovich in a duel resulting in the Blood Dragon being seriously harmed and carried away by his entourage. Katrina goes to see Vekarin informing him of the council's new plan, to resurrect his wife in hope of gaining his favour, dismissing her Vekarin seems reluctant to believe this. Lesa, Katrina, Graveclaw and V'azrin enter a portal into Morr's realm to look for Victarias whilst Milosh (who has now discovered his sire was Vlad), Simon, Mircea, Rowhaine, Rayla, Sariah, Jan and Luke travel to Karak Eight Peaks to try and find an artefact to help counter Mannfred's powers. Drakki and Cyn also mysteriously disappear in this chapter and Xatac makes his appearance.

## Supplemental Piece to Chapter 13

Details Katie's hunt for Rask and her subsequent capture

## Chapter 14 - The Depths of Damnation

In an attempt to convince Vekarin to rejoin the council Lesa, V'azrin, Graveclaw and Katrina travel to the realm of Morr to rescue his wife, who has been trapped and tortured in the deepest level of hell. Vekarin, hearing their plan, follows them in and helps the expedition, lending the use of his powerful magical item, an enchanted mask. Due to the dampening field in hell V'azrin and Graveclaw revert back to their human appearances and magic is rendered next to useless. The group battles through the many levels before Graveclaw is kidnapped by the Avatar of Morr. The group continues down to the final level where they rediscover Graveclaw as well as a long forgotten vampire warrior. In the ensuing fight the vampire warrior challenges the Avatar of Morr and eventually beats him, releasing his captured souls. Vekarin's wife, Victarias, is rescued and the group then manage to make their escape though the mysterious vampire is left behind.

## Chapter 15 - The Forgotten Warrior

Milosh, Mircea and Simon travel to Karak Eight Peaks with their various gets, after fighting off an enraged Merovich they descend into the tunnels of Karak Eight Peaks, interceding in a battle between dwarfs and goblins on the way. After a long journey they find the vault, but it is defended by a potent dwarf warrior. As they try to overcome the guardian they are suddenly attacked from behind.

Magneqrox under the command of Arkhan the Black attack the group, trying to find out information on the location of the Claw of Nagash. Realising they are running short of time the vampires retreat into the back of the vault, and which point the vampire lord Sweeney Todd makes an appearance, whilst Arkhan challenges and defeats the dwarven guardian. Meanwhile the council find the artefact but it is not in their hands for long, as Rask suddenly appears and steals it. Magneqrox fuelled by Arkhan's magic attempt to overwhelm the council but fails, forcing Arkhan to intervene. During the battle Magneqrox, Finelle and Rask all make good their escape, though on the mountain-side Magneqrox runs into Merovich and an unholy alliance is formed. After besting the vampire lords Arkhan suddenly disappears and the council head back to Nexeternus, their mission a failure.

The Legion of Nagash

I don't know about everyone else, but when they split the fourth edition undead into Vampire Counts and Tomb Kings I was gutted. I really was, and all because of one person. Nagash. He has always been, and always will be my favourite character in Warhammer. I don't think any other mortal has been so intrinsically evil, and done as much as the Great Lord of Undeath himself.

Since then I have waited in anticipation for Nagash to make his grand return, but alas I am still waiting. So I was very interested when I joined Carpe Noctem to discover they had decided to create their very own army – the Legion of Nagash. At that time it was lead by one of our visionary members Avaris, who sadly no longer frequents CN.

The idea behind the project is simple. Create a full army list from scratch that is as original and unique as possible, whilst still being balanced and fun to play. One of the first decisions that was made, was that the Legion would be a mixture of undead and alive units (referred to as Nagashi), to represent the secret cult of human worshippers who worshipped the Dark Lord. This in itself has vastly differentiated this army from TK and VC, as finding the synergy between such different troop types will be interesting to say the least.

So how does the process work? Well it is a collective effort, though normally one person puts forward a suggestion or starts a topic on a particular unit, character etc. It is then discussed in depth to see if it fits in with fluff, to see if the rules are fair and so forth. Normally the final part of this long discussion is deciding the points, which is normally lead by Arion, using his superb pointing techniques as shown elsewhere in this issue. Unfortunately however hard we all try, it is rare all of us agree. However when the majority are happy we will then go to the next stage....

The vote. The final draft is put to the forum for everyone to see and vote on. However one thing that is excluded is the background or fluff for said unit. This is mainly because whilst we can get a majority to agree on the rules, when it comes to fluff the discussion can go on forever! So the vote is just check the rules look reasonably fair, and we have not over-looked something.

So far using this process we have drawn up a basic army list, and we are slowly but surely working through the various units and items. Here is an example of the Lord choices that were voted through for the Legion:

Lords  
Dread Lord – 310pts

M	Ws	Bs	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	6	0	5	6	4	5	4	10

Magic  
The Dread Lord knows all four Rituals of Nagash and may cast one per magic phase. For all other purposes he is not counted as a wizard and does not generate power / dispel dice etc.

Equipment  
- Hand Weapon  
- Shield  
- Full Plate Armour (4+ armour save)

Special Rules  
- Undead  
- Wight Blades  
- Terror  
- Implacable Will: Any unit which the Dread Lord joins may march move heedless of march block, or any other marching restrictions.

In addition any unit subject to the Alive! special rule will become unbreakable, and any Undead unit will lose one less wound due to combat resolution, if joined by the Dread Lord.

**Options**

- Great Weapon 14 pts.
- Exchange shield for additional Hand Weapon 12 pts.
- Lance(if mounted) 18 pts.

- Mount(one choice only)
- Skeletal Steed 21 pts.
- Barding for Skeletal Steed 7 pts.
- Hellsteed 24 pts.
- Choice to ride whichever monster mount is decided for Nagash's Legion

**Magic Items**

Common/Nagash's Legion lists up to a total of 100 pts.

**\*\*\*Disciple of Nagash - 260 pts**

M	Ws	Bs	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	3	3	3	4	3	4	1	9

**Magic**

A Disciple of Nagash is a Level 3 wizard. He may choose spells from the Lore of Shadows, Death, or Nagash and may cast two Rituals of Nagash per turn, in addition to his normal spells.

**Equipment**

- Hand Weapon
- Scarab Jar: Strength 4 breath weapon. One Use Only

**Options**

- May be upgraded to a Level 4 wizard for +35 pts.

**Special Rules**

- Undead
- Master of Undeath: Gains a +1 to cast spells from the Lore of Nagash.

**Mount (one choice only)**

- Skeletal Steed.....12 pts.
- Hellsteed.....15 pts.
- (Monster Mount choice for Nagash's Legion)

**Magic Items**

Common/Nagash's Legion Lists up to a total of 100 pts.  
A Disciple of Nagash *must* choose one Book of Nagash as described in the Arcane Item section. This does not count towards his magic item allowance.

**\*\*\*Revenant - 275pts**

M	Ws	Bs	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
5	7	0	4	4	3	6	5	9

**Magic**

The Revenant knows all four Rituals of Nagash and may cast two per magic phase.

**Equipment**

- Hand Weapon
- Floating Armour (Described below)

**Special Rules**

- Undead
- Ethereal
- Hatred
- Unseen Death:

The Revenants blade belongs to the world of spirits and death, its sharp edge cannot be seen but those struck by its cold edge feel it nonetheless. All attacks made by the Revenants mundane weapons have the armour piercing special rule. Note this is classed as an ability of the Revenant and not the weapon and thus cannot be negated.  
-Magical Aura:

Each Revenant on the board adds two power dice in the Legion's magic phase to the army's dice pool, which may be used by any friendly caster.

**Options**

- Great Weapon 8 pts.
- Additional Hand Weapon 8 pts.

**Magic Items**

- Floating Armour - Magic Armour
- The plates of ancient armour float atop the spirit form of Revenant, shifting and moving to protect its wearer as best as possible.
- Confers a 4+ ward save

- Common/Nagash's Legion lists up to a total of 100 pts.

The Revenant may not choose a magic weapon or armour, and it may only choose Dispel Scrolls as an Arcane option.

As you can see, there are still many units that need discussion (such as the monster mounts). In such cases these entries will be updated as the process carries on. But in the end we hope to have developed a list which should be fair, and above all fun, to play.

If you do enjoy being creative, and would like to help design the Legion of Nagash then come along and have a look. Everyone's ideas and input are always welcome, and soon you could be playing with an army you helped design!

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## Bloodline Armies

Thus we come to the most recent (apart from the Invocation) user project.

When the latest Vampire Counts books were released many lamented the loss of the bloodlines, myself included. Made only into fluff it was even harder for me to field my lovely naked Lahmian ladies, especially in the way I imagined them.

It is possible of course to use the current powers and items as proxies, using the powers whilst changing the fluff. So Aura of Dark Majesty is instead described as Stunning Beauty and so forth. But still, for many of us it wasn't the same.....

So a poll was taken and as many of CN's members (myself included) wanted to try and recreate the bloodlines, this user project was started. The idea was simple enough, create bloodline powers and stat changes for each bloodline (Von Carstein, Blood Dragon, Strigoi, Lahmian, Necrarch, ) and also create the rules for the much missed Master Necromancer.

One of the key things we wanted to do however, was to make each bloodline as viable as the next. In the sixth edition Lahmians were notoriously under powered compared to the other lines for example. So with the powers each line had to be balanced

and the same power level as each other, whilst still retaining their uniqueness.

So far we have made superb progress. Most of the powers have been drawn up, and are currently in the voting process (which works the same as Nagash's Legion), and the stat changes for each bloodline are also nearly complete.

As an addition we have also decided to create themed army lists for each line, which could be chosen if a player wanted to have an army entirely based around the background of their chosen line. However the themed army lists are not mandatory, the powers and stat changes should hopefully work well with the standard VC army list.

As with the other user projects, additional input is always welcome. So whilst a good portion of the work has already been done, there is still much more to do. Feel free to come along and offer your help and opinion if you're interested!

Here is an example of the work that is being done. It is the Strigoi Bloodline Powers that were successfully voted through. (I must give credit to Danceman who designed most of these powers).

### Ancient Beast of Strigoi: 100pts

*The eldest of the Strigoi possess not only brutal strength but also the pride and spirit of the ancient lords of their bloodline.*

The vampire gains regeneration, +1 Strength and +1 attack. In addition, all friendly Ghouls and Varghulfs within 6" of the vampire suffer one less wound exactly as if the armies BSB were present. If the BSB is present the effects are cumulative.

### Varghkin: 50pts

*The vampire has truly embraced its bestial nature.*

The vampire gains +1 Strength, Toughness and movement value, in addition the vampire will have -1 to his WS. The vampire may not pick any additional vampire powers, magic items other upgrades (mounts, etc). Vampire counts are level 2 wizards, Vampires have no magic level at all.

### Massive Monstrosity : 45pts

*As time pass the Strigoi vampire grow tougher and tougher and merely shrug off wounds which would cripple or even kill lesser beings.*

+1 Toughness

### **Blood Rage : 30pts**

*Once the vampire has tasted blood the raging beast within is set free.*

After first wound dealt in close combat the vampire is subject to frenzy and can never lose it.

### **Bat form : 30pts**

*Its wicked diet has created a bond with the flying creatures of the night.*

Fly. One vampire in the army with this power may join a unit of fell bats.

### **Fear of the Hunter - 25pts**

*Just the smell of one these bestial vampire is enough to send horses or steeds into a fearful retreat.*

The vampire counts as causing terror in any cavalry, monster, chariot or swarm units. Such is the fear the affected units must take the relevant Fear and Terror tests at -1Ld, and it still applies if the unit is LtP.

### **Infinite hatred; As current book. 15pts**

(lower cost than VC book as Strigoi have Hatred as standard)

*Within the bitter souls of Strigoi vampires burns a great anger towards the living and the dead which never will be extinguished.*

### **Iron Sinews : 15pts**

The strength of the Strigoi vampires is goes beyond even that of the other lords of the night.

+ 1 Strength

(Please note that as stat changes etc are not yet confirmed, the wording does incorporate things such as magic items, which may not be available to this bloodline in the final version)



# check out rites of war

Rites of War has an open & friendly atmosphere to people looking for that much less structured experience. Like other sites, Row is about meeting people of like attitudes and is open to Players of any calling looking for a board of friends.

We have a small, but active membership and are a tight knit group.

Row is akin to your local Pub more than the local GW store. This isn't a replacement for other sites but an accessory to.

We offer our membership many services. From Army Blogs and contests. to an active Off-Topic. If Row sounds like a place for you. Head over and draft a pint on my tab. - Servius

[ritesofwar.org](http://ritesofwar.org)



# Special Character Design Rules

By Arion

Over at Carpe Noctem we have a section of the forum called Unit Development. Take a trawl here, and you will notice that for nearly every character idea posted there, there is one line in common.

This line is, of course, "Points: ????".

In this article and the next, I hope to answer that question. What number, small or large, should fill the gaping hole left by those question marks?

**Step Zero:** Read this over so your mind starts working subconsciously. Steps one to five detail basic character creation and stat modification. Later steps detail magic item creation.

Don't abuse the rules, we don't want to play against 'uber' dispellers with 10 dispel dice that utterly lock down any magic phase.

**Step One:** Choose a lord or hero choice from an army book, any army book, so this allows you to have a vampire leading an empire force for example. This is the "Base" you add your modifications to the points cost of this base.

**Step Two:** Choose a name for your character. You'll find mixing parts of names from the army book can sometimes help. There are also numerous online resources for this including Black Library and Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, I won't go over names here.

**Step Three:** Write up a small history for your character, the more you write the better people will accept your character, generally.... it depends on your writing.

**Step Four:** Work out how many points your character will spend on magic items and what. These can be from your army book or from the rulebook. Magic items can be changed at any time, obviously.

You may wish to give your characters extra allowance. You can purchase the following upgrade once:

An additional 30 points added to your characters normal magic item or Bloodline powers or sprites etc.

Allowance may be bought for 35pts on a hero and 45pts on a lord

**Step Five:** Work out any additions to your characters stats, stats with an asterisk can only be upgraded once. Those with a double asterisk may only be upgraded twice. Those with a triple asterisk can only be upgraded three times.

The max amount of upgrades from here a hero may take is 85pts worth; the max amount for lords is 140pts worth. To take away statistics simply subtract the points costs below, but there is no limit to how much you can take away.

However, a hero choice may not go below 35points, and a lord, 75pts. You may continue taking away stats after that, but it will have no effect on the points cost.

\*M +15pts for upgrade (10pts for heroes) (30 points for dwarves of all types)

Ws +10pts per upgrade

Bs + 5pts per upgrade

\*\*Str: +16pts for upgrade

\*T: +35pts for upgrade (25pts for heroes) (45 points for elves of all types.

W: +45pts for upgrade (35pts for heroes)

\*\*\*I: +5pts per upgrade

\*\*A: +17 pts per upgrade (12pts for heroes)

\*LD: +10pts per upgrade, may not go above Ld10 (15pts for heroes) (25 points for all Skaven)

**Step Six: Part One:** If you would like your character to have special rules, they must be chosen from the table below. If you purchase a level 1 advantage you must either choose a level 1 disadvantage or pay the points cost noted.

If you purchase a level 1 disadvantage then you either get a free level 1 advantage or the minus points. It is the same process for level 2 and level 3 special rules.

Try to fit with the fluff that is the point after all. Level one rules detail basic modifications, more suited to heroes, level two rules are more in-depth, level three rules allow extreme levels of immersion, from madness, to vampirism to almost monstrous abilities or legendary strategic ability, more suited to lords.

If your character already has one of the special rules, you may subtract for advantages or add for disadvantages to get rid of the rule. You add/ subtract the given points value.

You add/ subtract the given points value. So you could -10 points (-power dice) to show a bad mage, or a stupid one, or one that focused on dispelling, that is if you added a dispel dice instead.

### Special Rules Table.

Level One advantages:

Magic Resistance 1, (+15pts) (does not accumulate)

Poisoned attacks, (+10pts)

Immune to fear, (+15pts)

Hatred, (+15pts)

Eternal Hatred, (+20pts)

6+ scaly skin save, (+5pts) (does not accumulate)

Flaming attacks (+10pts)

Extra Power Dice (+20points)

Extra dispel dice (+25pts)

Level One Disadvantages

Stupidity (-10pts)

Must always accept challenges and issue them (-5pts)

Flammable, (-5pts)

Eccentric movement ( roll 1d6 for the movement) (- 10pts)

Cannibalism: If the character breaks a unit instead of pursuing, they must spend the rest of the combat phase staying till, eating the bodies of the fallen. In a VP game they gain 25 VP. (-15pts).

Antimagic resistance: Enemy gets +1 power dice for the spell if it is are cast on his unit or him. (-15pts).

### Examples of Basic Characters:

Ra'lak:

A necromancer that has degenerated to an almost ghoulish state, a good Necromancer for a Strigoi vampire for example.

Rules:

+1 T, +1 A, Poisoned attacks, Hatred, 6+ scaly skin save, Cannibalism

=25+12+10+15 (negated by disadvantage)  
+5+base= 107pts.

For fun let's give him one extra spell and the Black Periapt. Making him 137 points.

Is that unreasonable for a balanced, fluffy yet still slightly effective character?

And now for a few completely different characters, to demonstrate the versatility of this system. They will not have points values, so as not to let particular people work backwards and therefore arrive at the points of the model. I.e. violating copyright.

Lithorthea:

A wood elf that is a little too connected with the forest. Good for a forest spirit themed army list. (Wood Elf Noble)

Rules: 6+ Scaly skin, Immune to fear, Flammable, +1 Str

It seems a little more characterful than Glamour-weave, no?

For fun let's give her a sprite, madness perhaps?

Antonio van Helman: A refined duellist of the empire nobility. (Empire Noble)

+1 I

+1 A

Must always accept and issue challenges.

Which shows you that even a few minor changes can give a different feel, in this case arrogance, pride with a little speed and agility, appropriate for a blade focused character.

Cerial ve Koch:

A talented magician, top of his grade, but with a magical vulnerability as a result of a failed experiment and is now also tormented by an eternal fire.  
(Empire Battle Wizard)

+Power dice

Anti magic resistance.

Flaming attacks

Hatred.

Above shows that the rules can be used independently of stats. And vice-versa.

Above were the Basic SCDR, they allow you to lightly, or heavily theme a character with a little imagination.

In the further issues, this customisability will be further enhanced. One note however, show a little imagination with these rules, Cannibalism doesn't have to represent a cannibal, the rules could be used to represent a thief, a looter of dead bodies.

*Arion*



# Battle Report

By *Swissdictator*

This is a 2,250 matchup between Swissdictator (playing VC) of Carpe Noctem (and other sites), and Skittles (playing Chaos) from [www.ritesofwar.org](http://www.ritesofwar.org)

## Pregame thoughts

### Swissdictator

I'm returning after a Sabbatical year from Vampire Counts, and I am trying new lists that fit a Sylvanian theme. I've played the hard lists, and I'm not interested in that. I am making my lists tough, but still fitting a theme.

I know Skittles tends to go magic heavy, and I have not run the Black Coach in normal sized games since the new book came out. So I will give the Black Coach a try, as I have considered including it in the lists I have come up with lately.

Knowing his style, I am expecting several large blocks of warriors. I am hoping my ability to raise can give me enough edge on attrition that I can win.

I'm also trying out wraiths for the first time. I'm seeing if a small unit with a banshee can be effective. I'm taking the Helm again, as throwing the WS6 around could honestly help.

I'm doing my best to protect the general by having a Wight King bodyguard that pretty much always goes first with 5+ killing blow, a sacrificial champ (whom can be resurrected), as well as making sure the general himself is combat friendly.

I think the Cursed Book is underestimated, as that one turn where I get charged... I can make an opponent that much weaker against the Vampire.

I willingly risk the 4+ ward with stupidity, as with leadership 10, it is worth it for a 50% chance to save a wound on my most valuable figure. I'm also a fan of Blood Drinker as it makes it easier to keep the general at full health.

The Lost Legion of Boodleburg.

Vampire Lord

General; Level 3 Upgrade

Blood Drinker

Crown of the Damned

The Cursed Book

Avatar of Death (Shield)

Forbidden Lore

Infinite Hatred

Lord of the Dead

Wight King (Battle Standard Bearer)

Hand Weapon; Shield; Battle Standard Bearer;

Undead

Sword of Kings

Nightshroud

23 Grave Guard

FC Hand Weapon, Shield

The Banner of the Barrows

Vampire

1 The Flayed Hauberk

1 Dispel Scroll

1 Dark Acolyte

1 Lord of the Dead

19 Skeleton Warriors

FC Hand Weapon; Light Armour; Shield

Banner of the Endless Nightmare

Vampire

1 Enchanted Shield

1 Helm of Commandment

1 Avatar of Death (Shield)

1 Lord of the Dead

19 Skeleton Warriors

FC Hand Weapon; Light Armour; Shield

War Banner

25 Zombie Horde

Musician, Standard Bearer

1 Black Coach

3 Cairn Wraiths

1 Tomb Banshee **Total Roster Cost: 2247**

## Skittles

This is one of the most magic heavy lists I have taken, and is a change from my usual lists, which usually have either a single scroll caddy, or one level 4 caster.

However, I am not really sacrificing much close combat ability or units for this, and the near universal application of the Mark of Tzeentch (on everyone but the dogs and marauders) lets me work the high magic level into my theme.

I also haven't fought VC in quite some time, so this should be interesting.

I know Swiss is bringing a black coach, which may mess with my magic a bit, but hopefully my power level should be enough to limit his magic ability. As long as my warriors hold, I think this is a winnable fight.



## Warriors of Chaos Roster - Unnamed

17 Chaos Warriors of Tzeentch  
FC Hand Weapon/Shield

17 Chaos Warriors of Tzeentch  
FC Hand Weapon/Shield

10 Chaos Marauders  
Hand Weapon; Shield

12 Chosen of Tzeentch  
FC Hand Weapon; Halberd and Shield

5 Chaos Knights of Tzeentch  
Full Command

Exalted Hero of Tzeentch  
Shield  
Chaos Steed  
Rending Sword

Chaos Sorcerer of Tzeentch  
Level 2 Upgrade  
1 Dispel Scroll

Sorcerer Lord of Tzeentch  
General; Level 4 Upgrade  
The Bronze Armour of Zhrakk  
Infernal Puppet  
The Black Tongue

Chaos Sorcerer of Tzeentch  
Level 2 Upgrade  
Skull of Katam  
Third Eye of Tzeentch

5 Chaos Warhounds  
Scaly Skin

**Total Roster Cost: 2250**

Magic rolls:

Swissdictator:

Level 2: Gaze of Nagash, Curse of Years.

Level 1: Raise Dead

Vampire Lord knows all Spells due to bloodline power.

Skittles:

Level 2: Flickering Fire, Pandemonium

Level 2: Flickering Fire, Infernal Gateway

Level 4: Flickering Fire, Pandemonium, Call To Glory, Infernal Gateway

Swiss wins toss, goes first.

We also agreed if the Black Tongue killed the general first turn, we'd continue playing as if the item hadn't been used.

## Turn 1

I pass my stupidity on my general. I move my wraiths and coach up to counter charge the Chaos Knights.

I end up using my magic phase to buff my skeletons as much as possible. The Skellie block with Warbanner gains 10 skelles, the other block gains 8. Black Tongue causes vampire to miscast and adjusts to a roll of a 2... as we had agreed prior to the game, we'd ignore this with some laughs and move on as if it had not occurred..

Skittles Wins round one due to Miscast...

Round two picks up in dimension 2... as we assumed the VC would have lost with general dead on top of turn 1... and we had pre agreed to 'ignore' such an event if it happened first turn the way it did.

## Bottom of Turn 1

Movement:

Skittles moves forward.

Skittles lose a pool die to Coach, giving it +1 to impact hits. His magic phase is ineffective as Infernal Gateway fails, Pandemonium fails on a 7, Flickering Fire at coach, S2... no effect and Pandemonium #2 is dispelled.

## Turn 2

Coach and Wraiths charge Chaos Knights.

Casting: Warbanner unit gains 7 skellies, Vanhel's stopped, Curse on Chaos Knights kills a schmuck.

Shooting:

Banshee rolls a 10 into knights (12 total). Musician and Champ die. 2 6+ wards made (Skittles is very lucky on 6+ wards generally speaking, not that I'm complaining... just saying Tzeentch works for him).

Combat:

Coach gets 7 impact hits... 3 wound... all saved... I made the mistake of forgetting that the Wraiths had 3, not 2 attacks. That's what I get for setting my glasses down, though it didn't matter as the Wraiths kill rest of regular knights anyways.

Exalted drops 2 wraiths. Lose by 1. Wraiths take a wound. Coach makes ward.

## Bottom of turn 2

Magic:

Level 4 loses 2 dice to the Black Coach, Flickering kills 1 skeleton. Level 2 "borrows" Vampire General's spell and fails to cast Curse of Years.

Combat

Wraiths killed off by Knights. Coach takes no wounds this turn.

Top turn 3

Lose 1 die to Coach (giving it Killing Blow) I cast Vanhel's on the Black Coach to give it an edge... as with rerolls to hit on 5 attacks... there is a decent chance I could get a killing blow on his character. One of my Invocations fails on one die. Between Black Tongue and Infernal Puppet Skittles casts Gateway, which I scroll. Wound on one of his casters due to making failed invocation miscasts from his items.

Combat sees no wounds inflicted by either side, but with outnumber Coach breaks Exalted and catches him.

### Bottom of 3

Skittles makes a point of trying to make me move up and not turtle by flinging magic missiles at me. Infernal Gateway is cast on a 17, which I manage to dispel with exactly 17 on four dice! Skittles makes a comment about "Well played".

### Top of 4

I move up to force the issue, while the Coach moves to be able charge warrior blocks in the flank (or rear if they charge).

No dice absorbed. I try casting Vanhel's on my units trying to get the edge. My spells are dispelled!

### Bottom of 4

Both warrior blocks charge skeletons, while Chosen fail fear check on Grave Guard.

Amusingly, when the warriors are aligned they leave a gap barely wide enough for the Grave Guard to charge through to get to the chosen.

When I say barely, I mean by a hairs width they can make it. Skittles is happy as he can at least not worry about the Grave Guard flanking his warrior units. Which would be devastating.

Coach absorbs enough to fly now. I suddenly miss my old conversion where a screamer of Tzeentch is pulling the coach.

Infernal Gateway miscasts. Roll of 7. No other magic rolled as they are in combat.

Combat.

Warbanner unit: Chaos Champ and vampire enter into a challenge. No damage to either, but 5 skeletons die. Lose by 2, BSB nearby... so I lose a single skeleton.

Other skeleton block has a similar challenge which sees a wound inflicted on the Vampire (the one with the Helm). The skeletons have 4 rank bonus this turn due to banner. 5 Skeletons killed. I also lose this by two, and so I lose one skeleton to combat resolution.

### Top of Turn 5

Grave Guard charges Chosen. They hold. Meanwhile I charge the coach into the rear of the warrior block that charged the skeleton block that has the vampire with the Helm.

Vanhel's on Helm Vampire's unit is cast with Irresistible Force. This is to give myself a slight edge via the re-rolls.

While the Vanhel's helps with re-rolls, I roll average on to wound rolls and Skittles saves them all (those 6+ wards add up!) However the Coach kills 5. The warriors kill 3 skeletons. However I break the unit, and catch them with the coach.

The combat with the other skeleton block sees no wounds inflicted by either side! However with soft res I manage to win, and outnumber with fear. They end up not rolling Insane Courage and I pursue and catch.

Grave Guard champion challenges and puts a wound on his Lord. The Wight King drops 2 chosen, and the Vampire kills 2 as well. Wounds from my rank and file are saved. His champion fails to wound. They break after he failed to get insane courage, and are caught.

At this point Skittles concedes as it was getting late, and there was no real point in continuing just because he had dogs and marauders on the table.

## Post Game thoughts

### Swiss:

I wasn't disappointed by the Wraiths. While they did die, they destroyed the Chaos Knight unit and allowed the Coach to finish off the Exalted.

The combo charged helped, and even against a unit that can kill them... the Wraiths performed nicely. I was actually happy with the coach, despite being mildly wary of the changes.

I think I will include it in my future lists, as I personally like it from a thematic stand point... and it is still useful in many ways.

I am liking my skeleton horde approach. I am not the biggest fan of zombies or ghouls, and I like the skeletons. I also like other fluff associated with VC (thus why I am not playing Tomb Kings), so I think I will stick with the skeletons.

I think this is a list I could enjoy, and would run in the tournament scene in my area.

It's a good list, but enjoyable. Which addresses why I took a Sabbatical year from the VC last year.

### Skittles:

Well, I think this was one of the closest games Swiss and I have had in a while.

I definitely had more magic power than him, whereas Swiss had me outclassed with his fear causing and possibly a slight combat edge.

The Black Tongue-Infernal Gateway in round 1 was a move that I would usually only do in a more competitive setting, but Swiss and I had pre-agreed that we would keep playing through if that occurred.

I was also rather impressed that my army performed, by and large, up to expectations as far as morale. All in all, I am very happy with how the game turned out.

I also think that this list will do pretty well in the tournament I am taking it to this weekend.



# Tactica Advanced - Monster Mash!

By Ergo-Sum

It's a fact of life that most people will, at some point in their lives, find something particularly difficult to deal with. Often it might be a skill or it could be a particular talent that someone lacks when compared to others. The same could be said for armies. If it is true for armies, then one aspect that Vampire Counts really struggle with is large monsters, especially the flying sort with a hero on the back who's paid a visit to magic items R' Us.

Some of the more recent army books have certainly upped the power level of monsters, our own Varghulf is an example of the increasing potency of such creatures. Therefore they are increasingly appearing on the battlefields of the Old World, and you need to be forearmed as to how to deal with them. So, what to do? Well....

Right, what do most other armies do to combat such fearsome creatures? Ah yes, shoot them, with strength four missiles and war machines.

Ok, fantastic, now to get out my Vampire counts army book and get a load of .... Oh, not a lot of scope here for that kind of thing. Never mind, I'll just hit it with a really devastating direct damage spell from Lore of Vampires.... Ah, don't seem to have any of those either. Right, this might be a bit tricky!

## Classification

When looking at how to deal with monsters, it's often best to first define what we think of as monsters, in order to allow us to clarify some of the potential problems that they could cause us, and this will allow us to look at potential solutions.

To my mind, the most obvious, and for our army painful, characteristic that is common to monsters is a unit strength of 5 or more.

This is key, as it allows the monster to break ranks and gain the bonus for flank or rear attacking. It's pretty obvious that this, combined with their decent number of high strength attacks is going to be fairly unpleasant for one of our normal units, but if its combined with a frontal attack by a decent unit with a command, you could quite easily see a 20 man unit of Skeletons or Ghouls be wiped away in one turn from the effects of kills and crumbling. You could then have such monsters and units bursting through a carefully constructed battle line, maybe even being

able to fight again if the overrun into a second fight, with potentially similar results!

Another common trait of monsters is mobility, which I will talk more about in a little while, but even your most basic of monsters in going to be able to pivot on the spot, and most have a movement of at least 5", although it is often significantly higher. This makes them able to often outmanoeuvre our large static combat blocks of troops, and able to either jointly engage units as shown above, or to target support units such as small units of Black Knights or Corpse Carts. This also means that such monsters will often be fleeing from combat or over-running on 3D6, so even when they are beaten, it can be difficult to catch them. Monsters are large targets, which unfortunately helps us not one jot, however it helps them massively if they have shooting attacks or can fly. It means they can charge over your nice large hard units to get to something soft and juicy, like your general or a unit of wraiths behind your lines. Flying monsters are especially hard to catch if they don't want to be caught. This is especially problematic if you take the usual ploy of using a bunker unit to hide a weedy caster lord. Such superb mobility can mean getting charges on your bunker by the second or third turn.

The third Characteristic that monsters display is their superior statistic line. The vast majority of monsters are, at the very minimum, looking at four attacks with weapon skill 4 and strength 5. That is going to make a decent impact on most of our units. This is usually combined with a toughness of at least five; four or more wounds and often armour save as well. All this means a significant punch combined with a pretty decent defence. Our core units will often struggle to do any damage, although ghouls might fair slightly better with their poison, while our stronger units will be taking a lot of damage from such monsters, and not have the numbers to do significant damage back. The fact that they are immune to killing blow makes it even harder for two of our more decent combat units to make an impact. On top of all this, there is nearly always a combat style lord, or occasionally hero, who will be dealing out a lot of death as well. Obviously terror is often included in this statistic line, fortunately its one thing our immune to psychology units don't have to worry about, good thing too with our leadership scores!

So, in conclusion, we have a rank breaking, highly mobile unit that causes a lot of casualties to units it chooses to attack. Sounds impossible to deal with? Well don't worry! There are solutions!

## Solutions

Before discussing the solutions, it's worth pointing out some of the weaknesses of using a large monster, often with a hero or lord on it.

Firstly, it costs a significant number of points. Our own Vampire Lord and Zombie Dragon can often be coming in at close to 700 points. High Elf princes riding Star dragons and Bloodthirsters are often a significant cost once fully equipped. This will often mean that the army will be lacking points to cover other areas, which is something you should look to take advantage of in-game.

Secondly, they often take up an extra hero slot. This gives someone using such a monster less scope to spread the extra combat power of heroes into units that need it, or to get mages into their list. Again, this should give you areas of weakness you can exploit.

Thirdly, if not quite 'Eggs in one basket', it can often be one of only two or three 'baskets' that player is using. One bit of bad luck or bad rolling by said monster and rider might well mean that your opponent has lost a quarter or more of their army. If your opponent has such bad luck, be ready to seize the initiative to make it really count.



## 1) Chew on this! - The Tar Pit.

Ah, one of our most favoured and time honoured solutions for really hard units. If a unit like a monster plus combat lord is going to kill grave guard almost as easily as it's going to kill zombies, then feed him a load of cheap zombies in a huge unit.

Sure, they'll be absolutely murdered, but as long as you get a couple of decent Invocations into such a unit, they should hold it forever. While that's happening, you can use the rest of your army to fight what should be a much reduced army. The monster and rider might not even get any victory points for such a unit if you keep them large enough!

So you trade eighty odd points for their five or six hundred, while your nineteen hundred takes on their fourteen hundred. If it's the last or second to last turn, you could even let the monster kill the unit, as they'll almost certainly not get in another charge again.

So, problem fixed? Well, yes, if you play someone who is going to constantly charge their monster into your rubbish units of zombies. However, someone might do that once, or if they are not used to playing against undead, you can bet they will not do it a second time! Most opponents learn pretty quickly, or more usually figure out for themselves before the game even starts, that zombies are not worth killing. Another problem with such a tar pit move is that it will depend on the enemy support near such a monster.

If a large unit with decent static combat resolution, or a decent unit able to do a good number of wounds (and on zombies, this is a lot of units!) can get on the flank or rear of your tar pit, then they can crumble away pretty quickly. Of course, this may well be worth doing if it buys you a turn or two of peace from such a monster, but you need to consider it in light of your whole game strategy and in-game situation.

You might say 'well OK, let's use ethereals to tar pit the monster. The monster will only get +1 CR for outnumbering, and the ethereals should manage at least a wound a turn'. Well, that is true, but it's a rather dangerous strategy to take, in my opinion.

Firstly, nearly all such lords or heroes on monsters will have a magic weapon or way of doing magical attacks. If it makes the monster's attacks magical as well, then a two hundred and fifty point unit of wraiths can die very quickly to such a magical onslaught.

If people know, or suspect it is highly likely, that they will be playing against vampires; you can expect such magic attacks or weapon on a monster. In tournaments, I would pretty much expect any such monster rider to be wielding magical attacks, even if it's just a Sword of Might.

Secondly, ethereals are equally vulnerable to being flanked by a decent combat resolution unit with full command, causing them to crumble away rather quickly. Thirdly, while this might work against 'weaker' monsters like Manticores or Griffins, against the stronger monsters such as Star dragons or Bloodthirsters even four Wraiths, with the Helm of Commandment used on them, only average one and a third wounds per combat round. One bad round of rolling for the wraiths could be very unpleasant. Spirit hosts will be lucky to do a wound every other combat round, even to weaker monsters, although they do have the advantage of outnumbering.

Of course you could, in some circumstances, attack the much less tough rider; however this is usually not advisable unless you have some sort of special attack like killing blow. Monster riders expect to be in combat, often with other lords or similarly hard units, and you have no way of knowing what equipment they are carrying. Dark Elf, High Elf and Chaos lords can all make themselves pretty invulnerable to damage, while still putting out some reasonable damage. It's usually best to target the monster, as you know there will not be any nasty surprises,, for example our own Cursed Book being suddenly used on you. Finally, it's still quite difficult to actually get your ethereals in contact with the monster, especially flying monsters. This is easier to do with wraiths, due to their skirmisher status and decent movement characteristic, but still not easy to achieve.

Of course you cry 'Let's use Van Hel's to magic them in to the monster!' which leads me nicely too...

## **2) Hubble Bubble – Magic**

Another natural solution to the problem of large monster is to focus your magical might on them, in an effort to do a similar job to missile troops and war machines of other armies. While at first this might seem a reasonable solution, there are difficulties with this. Firstly, when one examines the Lore of Vampires, you'll see that although there are three spells that do damage, two can only do one wound to the monster, and none of the direct damage spells are necromancy spells.

This means that your opponent is likely to try their best to stop them, if they look likely to impair his monster. Additionally, one of these spells can only realistically be cast by a Lord level vampire. The other spell, multi-damaging Gaze of Nagash, is only likely to do about one and half wounds to the weakest ridden monster, and less than a wound to the stronger variety, combined with a possible wound on the rider, dependant on magical equipment.

Factor in only being able to cast such spells once per mage per turn, and you can see that although such casting may be able to weaken a large monster over several turns, you are unlikely to be able to kill it with such effects.

What about using Forbidden Lore, you say? While that power is very useful, it is only really effective on a lord, so requires you to use a caster lord in order to gain the maximum utility out of such a power. There are some magic spells which seem purpose built to take on large monsters; however they have some weaknesses too.

Spells such as Pit of Shades from Shadows or The Beast Cowers from Beasts would seem excellent counters to large monsters, but they suffer similar a weaknesses to all non-necromancy spells, they can only be attempted once per turn. Your opponent is going to realise why you have taken Beasts or Shadows (especially as you get all the spells), and is likely going to let you cast most of your other spells, retaining their dispel dice and/or dispel scrolls for that all important Pit of Shades or Beast Cowers.

Although a useful way to get other spells off, you're still left with a rampaging monster to deal with! A common support hero in lists with a character on a monster is the classic scroll caddy – Level 1 mage with two dispel scrolls. Unless you're lucky enough to roll a lot of sixes when casting magic, this little fella is probably going to stop any successful casting of such anti-monster spells at least twice, by which time it might be too late.

On top of all this, the latest FAQ seems to suggest (although there is a fair degree of internet discussion about this) that such single model units take any such characteristic tests on one roll, on the best score. That means, even if you get Pit of Shades off, it's likely to only work if your opponent rolls a six. That's also not taking into account that the new High Elf dragon has a larger base, so is only hit by Pit of Shades on a four or more. As you can all work out, that's a rather long shot in any ones book.

Ok, go for damage instead, Lore of Fire or Heavens? However, this basically just gives us some more direct damage spells similar to Gaze of Nagash, and while you could in theory, whittle away such a monsters wounds, it's unlikely to happen on all but weakest of monsters. This would also need your vampire to often have line of sight to such a monster, which might mean having to leave a unit, or turn/reform a unit in an odd way. Neither of these options are very desirable, particularly if there is a large monster who can fly lurking around, or other enemy units waiting to take advantage of such manoeuvring.

However, remember that we mentioned Van Hel's? Now this is a useful spell, to trap such a monster. It's got several important factors going for it. Firstly, it's a necromancy spell, so it has the ability to be cast over and over again by the same mage, power dice permitting. Secondly, there are a number of ways that you can be certain of getting it in to your army – Forbidden Lore, The Book of Arkhan or as a choice of spell on a necromancer. Thirdly, it has a pretty low casting value of 7, so even if you roll it for a level one vampire or take it on a necromancer or as forbidden lore, you've got a reasonable chance of casting it. I do think that if you take it as a choice on a necromancer, it is a good idea to arm the necromancer with power stones. While you can try to cast Van Hel's on two dice, you've only got about a 58% of actually casting the spell, with three dice it's about a 92% chance to cast. So the ability to get Van Hel's off for certain is usually worth the expense and one shot-ness of Power stones. They also have a surprise factor, which makes it hard for opponents to anticipate and plan for.

Now Van Hel's by its self is not going to win you a battle against a monster, what you need is something to Van Hel's into said monster, well we've really got two choices. Remember the huge tar pit that we talked about as the first solution, but that monsters are often too mobile and players too smart to charge into your tar pit? Ha, well now our tar pit is going to go after the monster! Repeated Van Hel's castings should, given the vagaries of dice, allow you to charge into most monsters and begin the process of tying them up all game. However, your zombies march 8", and then Van Hel's allows you to go another 8", for a move of 16". This might not be far enough, especially for flying monsters. So what to do? Well you could try a variant on the tar pit, which is the challenge pit.

### 3) Who will fight me? Why will no-one fight me?

#### Challenge pit

One of the particularly sneaky things that we can do, as Vampire Counts, is re-raise our command group models, in particular our champions.

This means that you can issue a challenge with a champion, who will get killed by a monster and hero, but who can then be re-raised in our next magic phase. If you can get two units with champions into such a monster model, you can challenge with one champion in each combat phase, and then should be able to re-raise both. OK, you say, what's the point of doing a challenge?

Well, let's take a standard unit of twenty skeletons with full command. The static combat resolution they bring to a fight against a monster is +3 for ranks, +1 for out-numbering, +1 for a standard, and maybe +1 for a musician if it's a drawn combat. That's a total +5, winning on a draw. In a challenge, the most you can achieve is +5 overkill wounds and the number of



wounds available.

So, in such a challenge, a Monster will have to six wounds to the challenging champion to actually not have to take a break test, and even if they do, you'll only have lost one model to crumbling and the champion. Now, even a Star dragon with a High Elf Prince will only just about manage to average six wounds on a skeleton champion, and that's one of the stronger monster builds.

Now imagine if you used Helm of commandment on your skeleton champion, now that Star Dragon and High Elf prince are only averaging about four and half wounds. What if your skeletons had a flank or were on higher ground? The monster and character can't actually win that fight. Or if you gave your skeletons the Warbanner?

Such a unit will suffer similar problems to the zombie tar pit tactic, in that no one is going to charge a challengeable monster in to such a unit, and even with Van Hel's, you can only go a combined 16", not enough to catch a lot of monsters, especially of the flying variety.

Well, the answer is to use a faster unit, that's still capable of putting out a challenge – behold the seven Dire Wolf unit with a Doom Wolf. This unit is such a simple and eloquent solution as to how to get a challenge in on such large challengeable monsters, that your opponent will almost certainly not see it coming the first time, unless they have read about it. (*Which they are doing right here – dammit! DoN*)

Dire wolves can charge or march 18" and have the free reform to allow them to be able to 'chase' monster around or anticipate where they might land if flying. It's fairly possible you might not even to rely on magic to get your wolves into combat, or you can use them as flank shields on units like a generals bunker unit if you think you're just out of charge range and do not wish to risk a Van Hel's.

When they make contact with a monster, then the doom wolf challenges, and as we have already seen, this can lead to maximum combat resolution of +6 for the monster. You have six wolves left, who with their unit strength of twelve, will outnumber the monster, meaning that 5 of your wolves will die from crumbling, but importantly leaving one to remain to keep the monster in place for next turn.

This effectively gives you two turns to either move units or summon zombies in order to tar pit or challenge pit the monster again next turn. Sceptre de Noirod can be useful, for helping you summon extra zombies in this tactic. Once you are committed with this strategy, you really have to go for it, in terms of making this your number one priority in the magic phase. Once opponents become aware of this tactic, you can bet they will try to get rid of such wolf units.

This tactic can work with smaller wolf units, but is no longer a certainty to work, although against 'weaker' monsters it should be ok. Often opponents will try to use missile fire to remove your wolves. You should be able to either re-summon them and/or hide them due to their fast cavalry status fairly easily, if they are vital. Other times, your opponent will move his monster in such a way to avoid your wolves, to which I say, well done, mission achieved.

Remember, if you keep such monster either away from fighting the units it wants to fight, and either fighting your infantry blocks or not in combat at all, then you've 'won'.

Every turn that a monster is not in combat or fighting the 'wrong' unit, is points your opponent has wasted. You are making their monster react to your cheap unit of dire wolves, rather than the other way around.

Ah, but what if you don't want to play a really caster focused list? Well don't worry, because there is a combat solution.

#### **4) If you can't beat them, join them!**

##### **Combat**

So, you decide all this just holding stuff up is not for you, you want to get those nice fat chunk of victory points in that monster, damn it! Well, there are ways and means open to you as well. I generally think there are only three units that are really capable of taking on the hardest monsters and coming out victorious.

Firstly, you have Grave Guard armed with great weapons. These hit hard with strength six attacks and reasonable weapon skill. They can be augmented with both the Banner of Borrows and the Helm of Commandment to make them hit on 2's, or 3's at worst.

However, with only one attack each and potentially getting only four Grave Guard in combat with such monsters, even against 'weaker' monsters, you'll only be averaging 2-3 wounds per round. That is of course assuming you get to make any attacks. Without the support of nearby Corpse Carts or Van Hel's being cast, there is a fairly strong likelihood that most of your Grave Guard would be killed off before they can strike.

This'll just turn your Grave Guard into a rather expensive tar pit, not really very effective. Additionally, they also suffer from the same problem as your tar pit units, which they are unlikely to be able to catch any monsters you might actually want them to fight, without a considerable expenditure of magical power.

To my mind, if you're going through all this trouble to trap a monster, you might as well do it with either a tar pit or a challenge pit, and just save yourself a ton of points to be spent on other things. One monster hunt this unit does perform well in is against the Lizardman multiple Stegadon lists, were this unit should have the numbers to survive, and be re-raised when hit by The Engine of the Gods shooting attack.

Although a good unit, I'm not sure it'll do enough or be quick enough to really threaten any really nasty monsters.

Another much touted unit to take on monsters is the fabled Blood knights. These knights do hit incredibly hard, and at a fraction of the cost of monster, well ok, maybe half the cost! Your average charge of four Blood Knights with the Royal Standard of Strigos (assuming they still have frenzy) should kill pretty much most monsters, with no additional support, as long as the dice don't desert you!

However, don't start opening the champagne bottles just yet; there are a few issues with our super heavy cavalry. Firstly they charge 14", meaning many monsters are going to out charge them, which can cause them really trouble as each knight lost dramatically reduces their damage potential, and they are 'only' hitting on strength five.

Likewise, if they have lost frenzy, they do far less damage, and could well be on the receiving end of a decent number of high strength attacks back. So in order to achieve a charge, you are again looking at needing the magical support of a Van Hel's. Secondly, they have only four wounds as a unit, with toughness four and a 2+ save. While that's quite good, a few bad saves could suddenly mean a reduced damage output, or even being wiped out.

They are vulnerable to a few rounds of shooting, especially war machines and armour piercing missile weapons. They are, to use a common phrase, a bit of a 'glass cannon'. They hit hard but can't really take it back.

Thirdly, that lovely damage improving frenzy can also be used against them. That usually means employing a screening unit of Dire wolves or Fell bats to stop this happening. However, the screening unit could be removed via magic or missiles, and then your Blood knights could spend the whole game chasing shadows. Fourthly, there are a collection of spells which will only affect cavalry, such as Beast Cowers. While this is a relatively minor point, it is another factor to consider. So, while Blood Knights have the impressive statistic lines and equipment to deal with monsters, the real issue will be getting them in to contact with the monster in more or less one piece.

This makes Blood Knights difficult to use as monster hunters. Of course you could keep them behind your lines, to discourage monsters from out flanking you, but then that's a fair chunk of your points and a really good combat unit not doing much for a lot of the battle. Your Blood Knights can't hope to cover every angle of attack a flying monster might employ, so they could even then be out manoeuvred and be unable to charge due to charge arcs.

I think Blood Knights are a bit hit or miss in this role, but when they hit, they really hit hard!

Another combat solution is to fight fire with fire, and take your own combat lord vampire on a Zombie dragon. I think, for the extra points you pay, the Zombie dragon is pretty superior to the Abyssal Horror, especially the greater damage capacity from the extra attacks and strength combined with the extra combat defence of the cloud of flies, so I'll assume we are going with that.

Now, I'm not going to discuss the various builds of combat vampire, that's really for another time. I'm going to assume that your lord has gone for the fairly standard red fury and infinite hatred in terms of powers and decent armour save with a lance. The sad truth is though, that while such a build as this will kill, the 'weaker' to 'average' monsters, against your Bloodthirsters and Star Dragons, you'll be achieving about 4 and half wounds on average. While this might let you pick off the monster later with magic or other heroes, it might be a bit late by then if your lord has been killed!

The likelihood is that if all of the return attacks are placed on your Zombie Dragon, it will probably die, and you can't even use something sneaky like the cursed book to protect it. Additionally, the above calculations are assuming that you get the charge in. While this is a fairly reasonable assumption against other units, many of the monsters you are likely to be going up against have a similar flying move, making this a very close call to make as to if you are in charge range or not. Obviously, if you're using a lance on your lord, your ability to damage a monster is far reduced if you are not charging.

There are some other disadvantages with using such model, not least being your generals' ability to keep your army marching. You will need to have other vampire units to force your other undead troops forward.

Additionally such vampire lords are incredibly expensive and will suffer from some of the classic weaknesses of having expensive monsters in your army, as pointed out at the start of this article.

In my mind, probably the most important weakness of such a tactic is that you are giving the enemy exactly what they want, a really expensive model to fight and try to kill. This is compounded by the fact that if your vampire general is killed, especially early in a game, you'll almost certainly loose.

It's my belief that other armies do such flying combat lords on dragons or similar models, cheaper, and often better, than us. I feel this is really an all or nothing strategy, which while it can work, will leave you extremely vulnerable in a game if it does not.

Overall, trying to defeat such beasts in straight up combat seems to be a risky strategy, that can yield large pay offs in terms of victory points, but seems too dependent on a good round of dice rolling or magic, with little chance of recovery if things go wrong.

## Conclusion

So after all that, how do we tackle large monsters?

Well, I think ones that do not fly can be tackled in a fairly conventional manner. Use a tar pit of troops to tie them up or a small sacrificial unit to re-direct them away from where they want to be.

You can then later potentially return to them to get the victory points if need be, using static combat resolution and/or harder hitting units/characters to break/kill them. In essence, treat them as you would a decent unit of heavy cavalry, and use similar tactics on them.

Large flying monsters, which usually have a character on them, are much nastier to deal with. I think, my preferred method with these is to try to challenge pit with seven Dire Wolves including Doom Wolf, and then stick them with a zombie tar pit, either summoned or marched over there. While this is not the easiest thing to do, and requires your Dire Wolves to be positioned in order to try to anticipate where the flying monster will be, I feel it is the most cost effective method.

Such a unit of wolves comes in at just under 70 points, hardly affecting your overall composition, and can still undertake all the normal roles required of them if your opponent decides to leave his monsters at home. It is also a fairly magic minimal strategy, in that while you may have to summon up some zombies, this should be fairly achievable to nearly all lists, and you are not relying on getting a Van Hel's off in the same turn in to get a huge block of troops into the flying monster.

This has the advantage that if something does go wrong in the magic phase, like a miscast that ends your turn, you can still have a chance of rescuing the situation in your next magic phase. Additionally, this tactic does not really rely on dice rolls to work,

always a good thing in my opinion. I would urge any competitive list to include at least one such Dire Wolf unit in it as a counter to such Bloodthirster or Star Dragon focused lists. There are ways to counter such a tactic, as there always are, but such manoeuvring and positioning is what the game should be about.

My final thought is; who'd have thought that the humble Doom Wolf would be such a dragon hunter?



# Basic Sculpting

By Evil Clown

Hey everyone,

In this article, I will try share as many techniques as possible that I use while sculpting.

Having made lots of Chaos Nurgle stuff in the past, I think it's safe to say they are not too hard to sculpt. The same, as you can guess, goes for Zombies - basically, they're both decaying bags of rotting meat, and also, they're both great fun to make from Green Stuff!

This guide will also show you some techniques like making belts and pumpkins from modelling putty.

*NOTE: This guide is for people who are just starting out with Green Stuff - experienced sculptors will probably not find this article very useful, as they know at least as much from this aspect of the hobby as I do, and probably more!*

Some basic outlines:

- Always keep your hands and sculpting tools wet, to avoid the putty sticking to your fingers/tools instead of sticking to the model.

- Don't make the model, or whatever it is you're sculpting in one go. Try to work in steps; I've ruined way too many models by trying to make them without letting the previous layer of Green Stuff dry.

- Start simple. I recommend that before you sculpt anything yourself, use Green Stuff to fill any gaps between existing models. This way, you can get the feeling of Green Stuff in your fingers and make it easy for yourself - when you think you've got it, you can try making stuff yourself, but even then make it as easy as possible.

- Use examples. Whatever it is you're making, proportions are usually one of the biggest problems you'll have, and making parts of the model the right size when compared to the rest of the model is an art in itself. Look for images to get a view on how those proportions should be. Also, examples are a great way of getting inspiration for your project!

- Choose the pose of your model, and what attributes it'll have in advance. Choose what bitz you'll use before you start sculpting.

- If something is too difficult to sculpt, look for easier alternatives. If you can't make a head for your zombie for example, try making a pumpkin for a head instead. Don't make it unnecessarily complicated for yourself, sculpting is difficult enough.

And now, my model, in ten simple steps:

**STEP 1:** Assemble all the bitz you need before sculpting. This is obviously the best way to ensure you won't look for bitz while your precious Green Stuff dries out, and just saves time. Of course, as this is a sculpting guide, the main 'bit' I'll be using here is Green Stuff itself, but I'll also be needing my trusty sculpting tools, together with wire and hobby scissors.



**STEP 2:** Make the base frame. As said, you'll need to do this in layers, and the base frame will (roughly) decide the shape of your end model. Begin by wrapping Green Stuff around small pieces of bent wire, for the base frame of the feet.



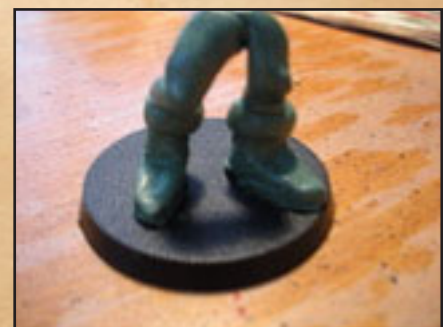
**Step 5:** Now wrap more Green Stuff around the 'feet', trying to make it as smooth as possible. Then roll a thicker layer on the upper part of the shoes, to make them look like boots.



**STEP 3:** Wrap Green Stuff around a piece of clay to make the beginnings of a torso. You could of course make it completely out of Green Stuff, but using another form of decent (and cheaper) clay obviously saves you money. Be sure to add extensions to the shoulders too, to make it easier for the arms to stay in place.



**Step 6:** If everything's dry, make legs by putting two rolls of Green Stuff on the boots. Make sure that you make clear knees, as this will make them look much more like, well, legs.



**STEP 4:** When the torso-in-making is dry, add the arms. Or rather, add two equally sized rolls of Green Stuff that are the beginnings of the arms. Also put a blob of modelling putty on the torso, by way of a neck.



**Step 7:** All the basics are now pretty much complete. Zombify the torso by putting a layer of Green Stuff on it, make it wet with some water, and press a prop of aluminum foil on the layer. You should now get a nice, diseased-looking result which is quick and easy to do.

In my model, I made the chest afterwards and carved a bit in it with a sculpting tool to make it look not-entirely-fresh, but you can happily use the aluminum foil technique here as well. Then mount the torso on legs.

**STEP 8:** To help stabilize the torso being mounted on legs (and also to make it look better), you can add a belt, which is easy to make.

Simply roll a piece of Green Stuff around the waist, and then add a square piece of Green Stuff in the middle. Carefully carve a smaller square in it, and you have the appearance of a simple yet effective belt.



**STEP 9:** Wrap some Green Stuff around the basics for the arms, and apply the same technique as you did for the torso. When these are dry, you can start making hands. Start by putting a blob on the end of the arm, and put whatever you want in his hand in it. Then wrap tiny pieces around that to make fingers.



**STEP 10:** Last, but definitely not least: the head. Now, sculpting human (or once-human) heads isn't the easiest of tasks, but a simple alternative is a pumpkin with a face carved into it!

First put a small blob on the neck. When that's dry, wrap a larger piece of Green Stuff around it and carve vertical lines in it, for a pumpkin-like effect.

The face can be any way you want, and as it's supposed to be a wee bit cartoony, you can go slightly over the top here with its expression.



And that's it! Hopefully you'll have enjoyed this article, and learned a couple of things from it for making your own models.



Zwingli Dordal drove his company to a point where he suspected he might end up killing the horses by the time he got to the town. Zwingli could hear the sound of battle coming from the town's direction, alerting him that the chaos warband had revealed itself. Dordal and his men had been on patrol, keeping vigilant in their pursuit of the main body of the Chaos forces. This battle was unlike many the sergeant had been in. This wasn't just some small town on the frontier of the empire, it was his home. This battle would be personal.

By the time Dordal arrived at the town, he could see the battle was bloody for both sides. Hordes of marauders were charging against the main body of the Empire lines, and he could see that the town's meagre collection of spearmen were barely holding on. Dordal could also see that the Chaos savages were followers of the plague god Nurgle, judging by the flies and the putrid appearance of the raiders.

The warband was not unique, as like most Chaos warbands it was made up primarily of marauders with a few units of fearsome warriors, but it was still lethal. At the rear of the Empire lines was a unit of knights, which were holding back for the time being.

The town, being small and not primarily wealthy, had a single cannon. The heavy gun let loose with a great roar, the lead shot ploughing a hole clear through the tightly packed Marauders. Even some of the Warriors, armoured as they were with plates of heavy steel, could not shrug off the weight of a cannon ball.

As he watched, the band of Empire knights charged into the massed ranks of the Chaos warriors, following up on the cannonade. To Dordal's horror, while the knights killed several dark warriors, most of the noble men were cut down. Fearing to lose the last vestige of hope they gave the militia, the knights withdrew. Some were unhorsed by the pursuing savages and flailed about in the muck of the battlefield, their mighty charges undone in moments before their eyes.

There were potent shamans amongst the enemy ranks, which sickened the veteran warrior in Dordal. Only one knight survived, who sped towards Dordal's relief force.



Mannslieb was full. The only sound upon the track was the rhythmic thumping of horses hooves. Viktor and the relief captain were all that were left. The chaos attack had been too large, the town had fallen. Shortly before its sacking, Viktor, last remaining knight of the black dragon, had ridden towards the man, grabbed his horse's reigns, and pulled it away from the battle. Naturally the rest of the relief force followed. All had slowly been killed off by pursuing Norse.

Now both the men were galloping as fast as their steeds could carry them. Mannslieb had yet to yield to the sun, and showed no signs of retreating to the west. During their midnight flight, Viktor had only offered one consolation to the man, that his orders chapter fortress was perched on the head of a small mountain not far from the battlefield. The man could see nothing, he was mortal, and did not have the sight of an immortal....yet. Viktor had seen a glimmer of martial pride and strength in the man's eyes, and he had spared him the black abyss of Morr's realm.

With his gaze, Viktor saw his ancestral castle rising into the black sky like a spear piercing the fabric of the world. Markof castle had stood for centuries, its towers holding firm against both storm and sorcery. Viktor could make out the shapes of his offspring keeping vigil on the walls, and whistled an old tune he had taught them that would mean to prepare for assault, and that the wolf was running home. Almost instantly, the pale shadows disappeared from the battlements.

Finally, Viktor led the man up the spiral of road that led to the fortress gates. They were already open. Swiftly he swung his right leg over his horse's back and vaulted to the ground, sprinting through the gate even as his steed and the militia captain rode through.

"Jacques, give this man fresh water and a new horse, then lead him to the armoury and gird him for battle in plate, then send him to me. Elijah, prepare the defences, and bar the gate." Viktor commanded, and then he set off at a brisk pace to his personal tower overlooking the battlements.

Even a veteran Dordal was unnerved by the fortress. He knew that with the name of the order, the fortress would likely be dark and foreboding. Having now arrived, he suspected that the order was likely devoted to Morr, which was not unheard of. When he was young he had been in a campaign against Bretonnians, and he had fought alongside knights who had dedicated themselves to Morr. They were grim, but were very brave. He hoped the same was true with this order.

Dordal said a silent prayer to Sigmar for the men he had lost in the route, as well as for his family. He looked up at the sky and swore an oath promising not to give up the fight until the foul barbarians were defeated. He then made a not so silent darker oath. He would avenge his family. He swore if he survived the fight, he would go north to fight the Chaos hordes. He'd rally anyone who would join his doomed cause, be they slayers, flagellants, or other men such as he. He would do anything short of swearing a pact with one of the dark gods themselves, in order to lead his unholy crusade. Only then did he notice the knight he had rode with. Viktor was his name, Dordal recalled. Viktor had been studying him, almost as if he had been trying to determine his mettle. The knight seemed to approve and walked forward offering him some water, which Dordal happily drank.

Dordal swapped out his armour for some better armour that Viktor offered. He had also been given command of a small retinue of soldiers very close to where Viktor would be. He mildly regretted the melodramatic oath he had made earlier, though his hatred for Chaos had certainly grown. Dordal kept moving, to keep the blood flowing, and in order to not let the cold bite too much. It hadn't been ten minutes by the time he heard the war drums of the diseased warriors. Dordal steeled himself for the coming battle, and allowed himself a small grin. He was as prepared as he would ever be.

Several hours later Dordal was fiercely defending the walls from the Chaos onslaught. With expert precision he decapitated one marauder, and then thrust his sword into the mouth of a marauder who had reached the top of the ladder. He stooped low grabbing a Chaos Warrior's helm and threw it into the head of a third marauder causing him to fall to his death. If Dordal had not been caught in the adrenaline and battle frenzy, he would have been more disturbed by the silence of the warriors under his command.

Swiftly he parried a blow from a Chaos Warrior, and dove down, striking below at one of the joints on the warrior's leg. The armour deflected the blow, but it did send the warrior slightly off balance, allowing Dordal time to strike again, this time with a more damaging blow. The warrior fell, now with only one full leg. One of Dordal's soldiers seized the opportunity and swung his axe, cutting off the warrior's head. With a swift heave, the warrior's corpse was thrown down into the mass below. Looking up Dordal saw another armoured warrior rushing him, but suddenly the warrior slowed and finally staggered to a halt only a couple meters away.

The warrior lurched, and fell over, the armour suddenly collapsing in on itself. As the helm rolled away to reveal an ancient man still aging into dust, Dordal shuddered at seeing the work of the magic. More marauders pushed forward to attack once more, but before they could reach him, he pushed the ladder back, causing it to fall back with several marauders and a few warriors still on it. The next thing Dordal saw was a marauder bringing down an axe towards his head, but a moment before it struck a glowing sword burst through the marauder's chest, spraying Dordal with blood. The marauder's body was carried forward by the momentum directly into Dordal, slamming his head into the concrete, the force of the blow knocking him unconscious.

He was only out for moments, his helm having softened the blow. Pushing the marauder off him, he quickly looked round. In front of him, back exposed, was one of the foul warriors with much more ornate armour. Likely one of the commanders. He had likely been spared as with all the blood on him, he had probably been mistaken for dead. Dordal caught up and grabbed his weapon quickly and silently as he could. He then recognized the man the Warrior was fighting. Viktor was struggling against the onslaught, and was pushed down a flight of stairs. Letting loose a roar, Dordal charged the warrior. Viktor had saved his life, it was time to return the favour.

The warrior looked back just in time just to deflect the blow. Dordal quickly realized he was out of his league, but he fought as best he could. With his next swipe he broke a chain on the warrior, sending some amulet tumbling to the ground. His opponent hesitated for a moment, which Dordal seized by cutting off one of the warrior's bloated hands. Almost instinctively the warrior slammed his shield into Dordal, sending him smashing into the wall and knocking the wind out of him. Casting off his shield, the warrior grabbed a new blade and swung at Dordal with blurring speed.

Clumsily dodging the next blow, Dordal just managed to escape it and turned to face the warrior. With his last reserves of strength he struck out, lodging his sword into the man's neck. Right as Dordal struck home, he felt a pain in his stomach, causing him to not fully drive the sword into his opponent. The warrior's blood sprayed everywhere. Having already lost a lot of blood from his missing hand, the warrior stumbled forward, and fell off the wall. He crashed into the ground far below, the sword now protruding fully from his neck.

In the calm amidst the battle, Dordal slowly sank down. He knew he was dying. He could see that the battle was won. He finally allowed himself to survey the situation, intending to remember his last battle in the afterlife. Only then did he realize who his allies had been. He could see some of the former troops of the Chaos warband were fighting their former allies. Dordal also could see that several of his allies were not of the living either. He had been fighting alongside the ranks of the undead. Viktor emerged from the stairs, fresh blood on his lips and Dordal finally understood. He knew he could not best the warrior, so he simply pushed himself to his feet.

"I am ready to die, Vampire."

"I will not kill you in such a way, it is not the Warrior way. You fought bravely. The world needs men such as you. We have won against the corruption today, but if you die, that fight gets that much harder."

"So you plan on raising me from the dead? Denying me eternal slumber? Would you do that to a warrior such as me?" Dordal enquired, disturbed not at the thought of his death, but of being a mindless zombie.

"I would not use you as a mindless automaton. That would be a waste. I have plenty of corpses to pick from for that. One more would not matter. No, without your essence you are nothing. We have much in common. We hate Chaos, and we both seek to fight it until we meet our final doom." Viktor spoke, drawing out the word 'final'.

Dordal shook his head, he knew what the Vampire was offering. He said a quick prayer asking for forgiveness from Sigmar.

"My lord is dead, as is what I had to live for. I now die for them, and with my death have a new lord. Do what needs to be done and I shall be your vassal."

With that Viktor bowed his head, showing respect to the living warrior Dordal had been. As the knight stepped forward, the last thing Dordal saw whilst alive was gaping mouth slowly lowering towards his neck.

When Dordal finally came to, he realized he was lying in a coffin. Sitting up with a start he realized Viktor was sat there waiting, a goblet in his hand. More than anything Dordal could feel a thirst burning within him. Seeing the look in his get's eyes, Viktor slowly extended a cup.

"Drink slowly, despite the desire to do otherwise." Dordal nodded, his military discipline keeping him from gulping it down.

"Blood from the Marauders?" he asked.

"No, they are too foul for even the greatest of us to consume, let alone a newly anointed. They are donations from the peasants under my banner. Unlike other lords, I care not for food or gold, but merely a portion of their blood. In exchange, they are protected."

Dordal nodded understanding the pact. It was not much different than many such feudal pacts, though this one was truly sealed with blood.

"First we teach you to control your thirst. Not just to spare those you would protect, but for reasons similar to that of teaching water discipline to the living warrior. First, let us walk. In time, you will be my brother in arms. Once, I was like you. A proud knight of the Empire, who fought for his people. When I was wounded outside of Praag, my captain saved me. Our unit had been slain, but he chose me to serve by his side in undeath due to my bravery and martial skill. He was of the order of the Blood Dragon. Unlike other vampires we do not desire power like they do, we seek the way of the warrior. This takes us on many paths, he and I have since parted ways, but still fight for the same purpose. My path, and now your path, is to serve those we cared for even after death."

"So death is not an end to my service, but a change. Will I be required to learn the ways of Necromancy too?" Dordal spat, still unnerved by the thought of raising the dead.

"No, we don't emphasize magic. We also disturb the dead less, and seek out dead warriors and raise them as wights to fight to ensure their sacrifice was not in vain. Enough questions for now, you need a little more rest. In six hours, we will have you up and about however. Your body has changed significantly, you will need to know your strength."

With that Viktor left, instructing the Vampire at the door to provide for Dordal. Dordal contemplated his new existence, and his new Lord. Soon however, he fell into a deep slumber.

